

# **AHOBILAM**

## **SRI NARASIMHA SWAMY TEMPLE**

**Prof. R.VASANTHA**



**TIRUMALA TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS**  
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**2001**



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## PUBLISHER'S NOTE

The unique manifestation of Sriman Narayana as Narasimha has been extolled by our great sages and acharyas. Born out of a pillar neither man nor beast, yet combining in Himself both aspects, this avatara of the Lord amply illustrates His supremacy and transcendence. To the devout, this God of ferocious form is the most alluring one whose compassion and love defy description. Sri Koorattalwan (Sri Vatsanka Misra) in one of his works expatiate on his graceful man-lion combination and emergence from a pillar and other extraordinary features which proclaim His paratva or all-transcending glory. There is no incarnation of the Lord in which the Lord's immanence and transcendence both shine forth simultaneously as in His Narasimha avatara.

Among the great shrines dedicated to Sri Narasimhaswami, Ahobilam occupies a pre-eminent place. This religious centre of great antiquity also known as Singavel Kunram in ancient Tamil classics is mentioned in many puranas like Kurma, Padma and Vishnu. According to the Brahmanda purana, this place was once the haunt of Hiranyakasipu who was slain by Sriman Narayana in his Narasimha avatara aspect for the sake of his devotee Prahlada. Tallapaka Annamacharya in one of his sankirtanas exultantly praises the presiding deity of Ahobilam thus : *Nava Narasimha namo/ Bhavanasinitheera Ahobala Narasimha.*

The present book on Ahobilam contains a detailed study of the history of Ahobilam, its growth and development from the pre-historic period to the present day, besides a brief survey of the sthalapuranas and other traditional accounts. A detailed study of the sculpture and iconography of the Ahobilam group of temples and an exhaustive analysis of the administrative and sacerdotal set-up prevalent from time to time make the book an indispensable guide to the students of history. A glossary of the technical terms is also added to help those who are not familiar with them.

We have utmost pleasure in placing this monograph on the sacred temples of Ahobilam before the readers.

Lakṣmī katākṣa Sarasīruha rājahamsa  
Pakṣīndraśaīla bhuvaṇam bhavaṇāsaṁīsam  
Gokṣīra hari ghaṇasara patira varṇam  
Vande kṛpānidhim ahobila narasimham

Tirupati,  
Dt. 14-11-2000.

P. Krishnalah,  
Executive Officer



## FOREWORD

Among India's vast artistic heritage, the temples of South India stand out prominently. These temples are treasure houses of artistic creations. At the same time, these temples are closely intertwined with the lives of the people living around these temples. They are sources of great spiritual support and comfort.

Ahobilam is the home of Vishnu (Narasimha). In the avatars of Vishnu, the incarnation of Narasimha constitutes the transition from the stage of the beast to the human. The earliest reference to this Avatara is found in the Mahabharat according to which Lord Madhusudana took the form of Narasimha to protect the devatas and the people from the hands of asura. The complete myth of the Avatara is found in the Harivamsa. The Puranas such as the Kurma Purana, the Padma Purana, the Vishnu Purana, and the Bhagavata Purana narrate the myth differently.

The cave shrines of Narasimha at Ahobilam belong to the Srivaishnava tradition. It is one of the hundred and eight sacred centres (divya kshetras) of Srivaishnavism. This is a temple whose origins go back to almost 2000 years. Ahobilam is the only place, which exhibits nine distinct iconographical forms of Narasimha. In addition to this, this place is intimately associated with Van Satagopa Jiyar, the first Jiyar of the Ahobila math. It is being popularly believed that God Narasimha Himself came in the form of an old man and offered sanyasa to the Jiyar. Despite the spectacular setting of the cave shrines on the Nallamala hill ranges, pillared mandapas, mathas, and other structures at this hill, Ahobilam has not attracted sufficient attention of historians and archaeologists.

Dr. Vasantha's research on Ahobilam, for the first time, brings Ahobilam to the attention of both scholars and the general readers. The scholarly work of Vasantha is a comprehensive and composite treatise on one of the less known Vaishnava cave shrines of South India belonging to early centuries and developed through the ages. As an introduction she has provided the evolution of the Srivaishnava religion and the regional history. Her book is a good example of how to benefit from traditional, epigraphical, artistic, architectural and iconographical evidences as well as prevalent ritualistic practices in the matter of developing a proper perspective of the history and role of any living temple. The author has made an interesting sociological study of how the temple grew from the position of a holy place to a centre of pilgrimage, capable of attracting devotees from far and wide. It is essential that a magnificent temple like this, with rich sculptural and iconographical wealth, should be properly studied and appreciated.

Professor Vasantha should be congratulated for having contributed a study of Ahobilam in this beautifully illustrated volume. Tirumala Tirupathi Devasthanams has to be congratulated on this publication.

Hyderabad,

Dt. 9-8-1999.

Dr. Haripriya Rangarajan

## PREFACE

The present work is an attempt to study the Narasimhaswami temples and caves at Ahobilam, Kurnool District, Andhra Pradesh, comprehensively from both the historical and the art-historic angles. In fact this study is partially in fulfillment of a need to provide a comprehensive picture of the nature and development of temples in different parts of South India. Keeping in view that a temple is not only a work of art but also a religious and socio-economic institution, quite a few temples in Tamilnadu and Karnataka have been well studied, while such a study was a desideratum with regard to Andhra Pradesh. It is for this purpose we have taken up the present work. The choice for such a study fell on the Narasimhaswami temples at Ahobilam because of the uniqueness of the place and availability of both literary and archaeological material useful for the purpose.

Ahobilam is one of the traditionally famous hundred and eight Srivaishnava centres in India. Secondly, Ahobilam is the only place where nine iconographic forms of Narasimha are found. Thirdly, Ahobilam is intimately associated with Van-Satagopa-Jiyar (the first Jiyar) of the Ahobilam math.

Detailed studies on many other Srivaishnava centres, spread over South India are available although such a study is lacking. This book intends to fill the gap and as far as Ahobilam shrines are concerned, it gives a picture of the development of this holy centre of the Srivaishnavas.

I am grateful to His Holiness Srivan Satagopa Sri Narayana Yatindra Mahadesikan for his holy blessings.

I express my profound sense of gratitude to Dr. Parabrahma Shastri for his scholarly guidance and permitting to study and make use of the unpublished epigraphs with him.

Several scholars have given advice, notably Sri Ramesh and other priests and Manager of the Ahobilam temple. Also I thank Sri N. V. Ramakrishnaiah Achari and Sri Allabaksh, Allagadda for nice drawings and photographs.

I gratefully acknowledge the interest taken by Sri P. Krishnaiah, I. A. S., Executive Officer, T. T. Devasthanams, and Sri N. S. Ramamurthy, Editor, T. T. D. for accepting this work for publication under the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams Publication scheme.

**R. Vasantha**

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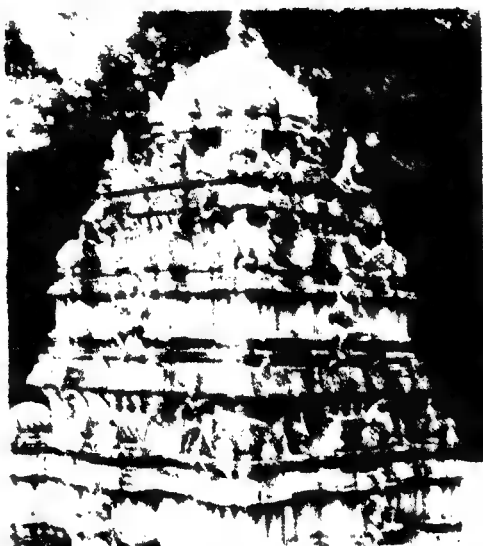
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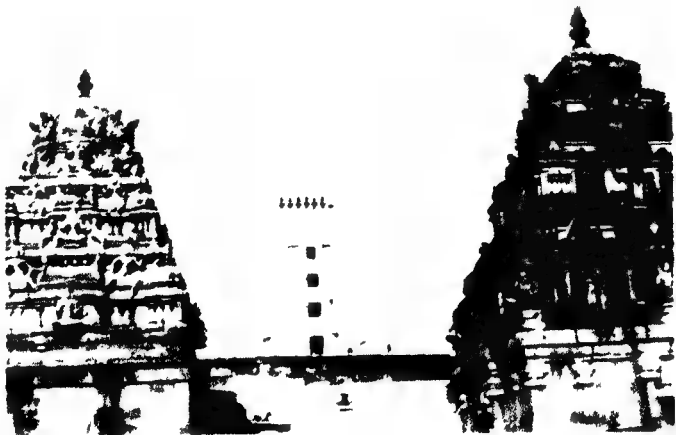




VIMANA OVER THE GARBHAGRIHA U A



GENERAL VIEW OF THE UPPER AHOBILAM



VIMANAS OVER THE NARASIMHA AND  
TAYAR SHRINE L A



GENERAL VIEW OF THE LOWER AHOBILAM



RAJA GOPURA, L A



ROWS OF PILLARS IN THE  
RANGAMANDAPA, L A



ROWS OF PILLARS IN THE RANGAMANDAPA L.A.,



UNJAL MANDAPA, L A



VISHVAKSENA MANDAPA, L A



SANNIDHI KONERU, L.A.,



UDYOGAMANDAPA U A



YOGA NARASIMHA SHRINE



GENERAL VIEW OF THE UPPER AHOILAM  
TEMPLE (WESTERN SIDE)



NARASIMHA TEARINC' HIRANYAKASIPU' U A



BHU-VARAHA NARASIMHA



PAVANA NARASIMHA



YOGA-NARASIMHA  
(NEAR PRAHLADA METTU)





KARANJA-NARASIMHA



JWALA-NARASIMHA (CHATURBUJA)



NARASIMHA CHASING HIRANYAKASIPU



YOGA-NARASIMHA, L.A



**BHARGAVA-NARASIMHA**



**MALOLA-NARASIMHA**



**JWALA-NARASIMHA (ASTABHUJA)**



**CHATRAVATA-NARASIMHA**



KALYANOTASAVA



DANURMASOTSAVA



DECORATED PROCESSIONAL IMAGES  
DURING BRAHMOTSAVA



DECORATED PROCESSIONAL  
IMAGES DURING BRAHMOTSAVA



DECORATED PROCESSIONAL  
DURING BRAHMOTSAVA



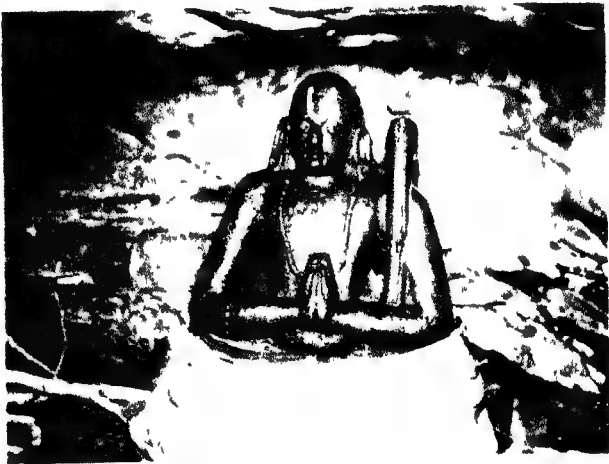
GARUDOTSAVA



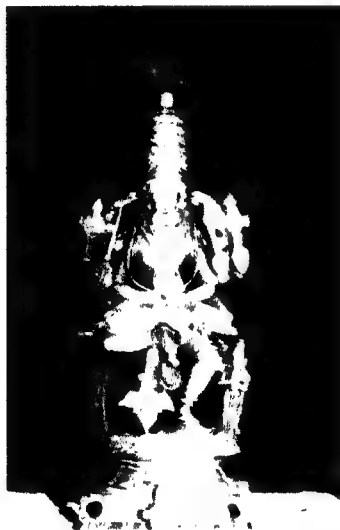
RATOTSAVA



RATOTSAVA



RAMANUJA U A



BRONZE IMAGE OF JWALA NARASIMHA



BRONZE IMAGE OF PAVANA  
NARASIMHA



BRONZE IMAGE OF NARASIMHA



BRONZE IMAGES OF THE UTSAVABARA



LEONARDO DA VINCI



CHEN CHU LAKSHMI U A



AMRUTAVALLI TAYAR L A



ANDAL L A



BRONZE IMAGE OF SUDARSHANA



BRONZE IMAGE OF VISWAKSENA



BRONZE IMAGE OF  
THIRUMANGAI ALVAR



BRONZE IMAGE OF KULASEKHARA  
ALVAR





BRONZE IMAGES OF ALVARS



BRONZE IMAGE OF RAMANUJA



BRONZE IMAGE OF ADVANSATAGOPA JIYAR



45TH JIYAR OF AHOBILA MATH

## INTRODUCTION

Any historian interested in the study of ancient and medieval history of South India often meets with a peculiar situation while dealing with the source material. The inscriptions which provide a firm basis for the reconstruction of ancient history and which most of the times happen to be the only material available are generally temple inscriptions. Similarly the majority of architectural monuments of the past now surviving are temples only. This situation may be due to the fact that the temples were bestowed more care in their execution, they being the houses of gods in contrast to the others associated with mortals. The temples were expected to be monuments to last perpetually and hence they would be constructed by utilizing better building materials and technology. They were also to be institutions to flourish for a longer time thus requiring perpetual endowments for their maintenance, the details of which would be recorded on imperishable stone for the guidance of future generations. This possibly accounts for the situation in which one finds the historical data available for ancient and medieval periods of South Indian history being more numerous relating to the temples than any other aspect of human activity. This abundance of data also provides a picture to the historian that the temple was a major social and economic institution in those times - a fact that has attracted many historians to take up studies relating to these aspects.

Studies on temples are being done in South India for a considerable period. Many of these are either concerned with the temples as surviving works of art, or as works of religious activity or as social institutions. We may mention here a few outstanding ones in this connection - those of K K Pillai,<sup>1</sup> K V Raman,<sup>2</sup> V N Hari Rao<sup>3</sup> and K Sundaram.<sup>4</sup> In these most of the above mentioned aspects have been taken together, considering the temple as integral organic institution in which all these are inseparably interrelated. There are also a few works which confine themselves to the study of architectural and sculptural aspects of individual temples or regional and dynastic groups.<sup>5</sup> In recent years there are also some interesting studies relating to temple economy, etc.<sup>6</sup> Even though a lot of labour has gone into the study of various aspects of the temples, comprehensive studies of individual temples are confined to those in Karnataka and Tamil Nadu only. Another region of South India which is equally rich in temples, i.e. Andhra Pradesh, has not so far gained any attention in this regard.<sup>7</sup> Therefore we felt that a study of the above type relating to the temple in the Andhra Pradesh region would be of value to have a better picture of the temple institutions in South India in general.

In this connection we opted to choose the Narasimhaswami temples at Ahobilam on two counts. The first aspect which attracted our attention towards these temples is that they have considerable

architectural, epigraphical and literary data useful for systematic study Secondly, Ahobilam is well known as the *nava-Narasimha Kshetra*

*Jwala Ahobila Maha Lola |  
Kroda Karancha Bhargava |  
Yogananda Kshatratvata |  
Pavaneya Nava Moorthayah ||*

Out of the 79 Narasimha temples spread over Andhra Pradesh (Rayalaseema-32, Coastal Andhra-26, Telangana-13, centres not located region-wise for lack of proper historical material-8), Ahobilam is the only place, which exhibits nine distinct iconographical forms of Narasimha In addition to this, Ahobilam is intimately associated with Van Satagopa *Jiyar* (the first *Jiyar*) of the Ahobila math, it is being believed that the God Narasimha himself came in the form of an old man and offered *sanyasa* ■ the *Jiyar* [PL 122], on the banks of *Bhavanasini* river This fact has not only enhanced ■ importance of Ahobilam among the *Srivaishnava* Centres but also has made this centre a spear-head of the *Srivaishnava* movement ■ the region of Andhra Further, this temple lends itself to an interesting sociological study in which the gradual growth of a centre of pilgrimage, from ■ earliest ■ of the establishment of a temple to ■ period when ■ gained ■ supreme position as ■ holy place capable of attracting devotees from far and wide, ■ be traced

In this book, ■ aim ■ making a comprehensive study of the Narasimhaswami temple Complex ■ Ahobilam both as ■ religious structural complex and as ■ socio-religious institution ■ it developed through the centuries of its growth

As far as the first aspect is concerned we have tried to provide a complete descriptive account of the architecture and sculpture of the temple, including the recognition of different chronological stages and their stylistic features With regard to the latter aspect, it is our intention to provide ■ picture of the rituals and festivals, the administration, management and economy as well ■ the interaction between the temple institution and the contemporary society, ■ they obtained through centuries of history of this temple

The ■ available for the study of this temple, as usual for any other historical subject, include both literary and archaeological material

Firstly, the Narasimhaswami temples in the Upper and the Lower Ahobilam are sufficiently major monuments as they have been in a good ■ of preservation As it would be noticeable even ■ a casual visitor, these temples ■ complexes that have grown through additions and alterations ■ from time to time Still, however, many of these stages of growth are identifiable on ■ basis of structural features and stylistic forms Thus these temple complexes lend themselves to the study of their growth on the very basis of the architectural ■ Similarly, there are a number of sacred, secular and decorative sculptures providing a rich array of material for stylistic ■ iconographic study

Secondly, there ■ altogether 30 inscriptions available at Ahobilam These inscriptions ■ in ■ Upper and the Lower Ahobilam engraved on ■ walls, pillars and stray ■ All are ■ inscriptions connected with different monuments of Ahobilam ■ appears that there were hundreds of copper-plate records preserved in ■ room ■ the Upper Ahobilam, adjacent to the ■ Shrine, but, later, ■ melt for the sake of copper ■ All ■ available inscriptions are in Telugu script and language except three inscriptions Out of three, two are in Sanskrit script and language ■ the other ■ in Kannada script and language The earliest of ■ inscriptions of Ahobilam belongs ■ the ■ of Chalukya Kirtivarman II (744- 755 A D ) and ■ latest to the time of Venkatapatraya II (1585-1614 A D ) Most of the inscriptions are donatory records, and ■ inscriptions provide us

rich data for the understanding of the various aspects of the temple. Many of these inscriptions are also highly valuable for fixing up the date of several monuments at Ahobilam.

Thirdly, there is a wealth of literary data available for the reconstruction of the history of the Srivaishnava establishment. These include *Sthalapuranas*, Srivaishnava hagiologies, literary compositions glorifying Ahobilam or dealing with the themes drawn from the legends connected with this place, stray references in other literary works and folk songs.

The *Sthalapurana* of this place is available in various *puranas* like the *Nrisimha Purana*, *Brahmandapurana* and *Narasimha purana*, each containing a few chapters concerning this temple. Besides these, another work *Kasikhandam* has a few chapters. The *Sthalapurana* of Ahobilam in Sanskrit gives a detailed description of the nine forms of Narasimha. Tamil poems, *Nalayira divyaprabandham*, has ten poems dedicated to the god of Ahobilam. These were composed by Tirumangal Alvar in the 7th-8th Century A.D. But the *Sthalamahatmya* is considered to be a later interpolation. We may also note, in addition, that the *Sthalapurana* of this place does not figure in any of the literary works of the medieval period, but several literary compositions based on the *sthalapuranas* appeared in the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries. V.G. Krishnamacharyulu observed on the nature and date of the *Sthalapuranas* from *Andhradesa* deserves quotation for comparison. He says, "Most of the *Sthalapuranas* were composed after the attempted establishment of Islam in Andhra during the 14th century. Islam posed a threat to the religious life of the Hindus and a number of efforts were made for rivetting the Brahminical religion into the minds of the people. The composition of the *Sthalapuranas* was one such effort".<sup>9</sup> These facts may hold good for the *Sthalapuranas* of Ahobilam too and they may have been composed somewhere between the 14th and 16th centuries.

Among the Sanskrit literary works, *Ramabhyudayam* of Saluva Narasimha (1486-91 A.D.), one of the illustrious kings of the Vijayanagara Empire, was a great devotee of god Narasimha. In the introduction to his work the King mentions clearly that he was born by the grace of god Narasimha of Ahobilam.<sup>10</sup> Another important Sanskrit work *Vasantika Parinayam*<sup>11</sup> by Van satagopa Yatindra Mahadesika, seventh *Jiyar* of the Ahobila *math* (1579 A.D.), is a drama depicting the marriage of Narasimha with Chenchita (a tribal girl).

The earliest Telugu work which makes a reference to Ahobilam is Errapragada's *Narasimha Purana*<sup>12</sup> (1324-1349 A.D.). The fifth chapter of this *purana* describes the importance of *Ahobila Kshetra* of the presiding deity. The preface to *Harivamsam*<sup>13</sup> (Uttarabhagam) by Errapragada has made a reference to the building of the steps to Upper Ahobilam by Vema Reddi.

The next important work is the corpus of Annamayya's devotional songs. Annamacharyulu (1408-1507 A.D.) and Peda Tirumalacharyulu (1460-1547 A.D.)<sup>14</sup> wrote a number of Sankirtanas (devotional songs) in favour of Ahobila Narasimha of Ahobilam.<sup>15</sup> It is stated that the third Tallapaka poet, Tirumalacharyulu (1485-1550 A.D.) made '*pratistha*' (Consecration) to the image of Narasimha in the Hanuman Shrine at Tirupati.<sup>16</sup> It is stated that Annamayya visited the Ahobilam temple and glorified the glory of god Narasimha.<sup>17</sup> It is attested by two copper-plates of Annamayya's Kirtanas, which are found at Ahobilam.<sup>18</sup> He praised the Lord of the Upper Ahobilam as the boon-giver.<sup>19</sup>

*Garudachala mahatmyam*<sup>20</sup> of Obayyanantri (17th century A.D.) is a very popular Yakshagana describing the supposed marriage of god Narasimha with a girl belonging to the Chenchu tribe. *Pratapacharitra* of Ekamranatha,<sup>21</sup> (1290-1323 A.D.) who received patronage from the Kakatiya Prataparudra II, made a passing reference to Ahobilam.

Anantamatya who flourished in the 15th century A.D.<sup>22</sup> wrote his work *Bhojarajiyamu* to god Ahobila Narasimha. Srinatha<sup>23</sup> in his *Kasikandam* (1440 A.D) also has made a reference to

Ahobilam. The renowned Telugu poet, Pingali Surana, (1560 A.D)<sup>24</sup> also makes reference to the god of Ahobilam, in his great classic *Kalapurnodayam*.

There are about six unpublished Telugu manuscripts, which provide information about the god Narasimha. *Lakshmi Narasimha Vilasamu* by Paidipati Venkata Nrisimha Kavi is preserved in Oriental Manuscripts Library, Madras.<sup>25</sup> This describes the love and marriage of god Narasimha with Chenchulakshmi.

*Vasantika Parinayamu*, a Yakshagana written by Kranja Venkatadri, is preserved in Saraswatimahall Library, Tanjore.<sup>26</sup>

Kattamanchi Kamesvara Kavi is the author of *Lakshmi Narasimha Charitramu*,<sup>27</sup> a *prabandha* narrating the legend of the incarnation of Narasimha and Ahobilam. This is in Oriental Manuscripts Library, Madras.

*Ahobila Narasimha Satakamu* is a palm leaf manuscript,<sup>28</sup> preserved in Oriental Research Institute of Manuscripts Library, Tirupati.

The other two manuscripts<sup>29</sup> *Sikhi Narasimha Satakam* and *Narasimha Dandakamu*<sup>30</sup> are preserved in Oriental Manuscripts Library, Madras.

Of great importance and utility is the paper manuscript of D. Ramaswamy Iyyengar of 1916, which is preserved in the State Archives,<sup>31</sup> Madras. It provides details about various aspects of the temple administration, and also gives the temple plans. The temple plans of 1916 are markedly different from the existing ground plan of the temples.

*Ahobilam Kaifiyat* and *Rudravaram Kaifiyat* are the two important written documents of considerable interest for our study. These are of much later period mostly recorded by the village officials. They contain day-to-day accounts of the happenings of the areas to which they pertain. But, almost all these *kaifiyats* here become fascinating reading material since, so far as the past events are concerned, they refer to quite a good number of traditional legends and stories which often remain unsubstantiated. In narrating such legends, the writers of the *Kaifiyats* have lost sense of time, chronology and facts. But they put greater emphasis on stories full of romantic or heroic deeds without any relation to facts. We have examined many *Kaifiyats* which deal with Ahobilam in sufficient detail, regarding their acceptability, in reconstructing the history of the place.

Mackenzie has done a great service to historical research by collecting many *kaifiyats* as he could and summarise them. In the manuscript No. 100<sup>32</sup> we have *Kaifiyats* of fifteen places and obviously the biggest one is the *Kaifiyat* of Ahobilam. The *Kaifiyat* of Ahobilam deals with the history of the place commencing from its foundation.

The God Narasimha of Ahobilam popularly called 'Ahobila' figures in the subject-matter of innumerable folk songs current among the populace of the region. Many of them not only praise this god as the greatest in fulfilling the wishes of the people, but also show him often times as not dissimilar to a member of their own community who enjoys life as a colourful personality with all the human urges and feelings of love and hatred. In this context a number of stories are round him due to the fertile imagination of the common folk. Most of the folk songs are still in the oral tradition on occasions by the village folk around.<sup>33</sup>

The book has been divided into two parts. Part One is devoted to provide a general geographical, historical and religious background pertinent to the study of the Narasimha temples. Part Two is completely devoted for the consideration of the various aspects of the Narasimha (both Upper and Lower) temples itself.

## 1. Location

Ahobilam is situated in the Nallamala hills, and is about 24 kms. from Allagadda taluq headquarters, 112 kms. from Cuddapah and 65 kms. from Nandyal in Andhra Pradesh. It can be reached by bus from Hyderabad and also by train via Kurnool and then by bus from there. The whole complex is composed of two parts - one called *Yeguva* Ahobilam which contains shrines devoted to (upper Ahobilam) *Nava* Narasimha (nine Narasimhas) and the other called *Diguva* Ahobilam (Lower Ahobilam) with a single shrine for Lakshmi Narasimha. Both are connected by a road, covering a distance of about 12.8 kms. from the Lower Ahobilam to the Upper Ahobilam. From the Upper Ahobilam, the other shrines are to be reached only by trekking and negotiating the difficult terrain of flowing streams and slippery rocks. Nature is bounteous. It affords plenty of water by way of ponds, brooks and also numerous resting places in the form of shady trees. One can witness several cave like rocks on the way. Lions and other wild animals dwell in the forest. If one undertakes a strenuous traverse of 8 kms. from the Upper Ahobilam, one can see the *ugrastambham* or *ukkukambhamu* (an immaculate iron pillar) on the mountain side to be the one from which Lord Narasimha emerged in his ferocious form in response to Prahlada's prayers.

## 2. Names of the place

The place is variously referred to in the inscriptions as *Vobula*<sup>1</sup>, *Ahobala*<sup>2</sup>, *Ahobila*<sup>3</sup>, *Ahobilagiri*<sup>4</sup>, *Vedadri*<sup>5</sup>, *Diguva Tirupati*<sup>6</sup>, *Garudadri*<sup>7</sup>, *Virakshetra*<sup>8</sup>, *Achalachaya Meru*<sup>9</sup>, *Singavel Kunram*<sup>10</sup>, *Nidhi*<sup>11</sup> and *Nagari*<sup>12</sup>. The popular name of the place in *Ahobila* and all the other names appear as *Ahobila* connoting its mythology, sanctity and glory. *Ahobala* is the ancient form of the present *Ahobila*. The earliest inscription naming this place as *Ahobala* belongs to 1124 A.D.<sup>13</sup>. According to the *sthal Purana*<sup>14</sup>, there are two popular legends, explaining the derivation of the word 'Ahobilam'. It is stated that the *Devas* (Gods), while witnessing the ferocious aspect (*Ugra Kala*) the lord took in order to crush Hiranyakasipu to pieces, exclaimed in wonder 'Ahobala' (literally, Lo! the stupendous strength!). Hence this place has come to be known as Ahobilam. In support of this derivation of the name, there is a popular Sanskrit verse about Ahobilam that reads:

*Ahoviryam Ahosauryam Ahobahu Parakramah |  
Narasimham Param Daivam Ahobilam Ahobalam ||*

The other version of Ahobila is ascribed to the great cave, where Garuda worshipped, penance and realised the Lord.

According to the *Ahobilam Kaifiyat*<sup>15</sup> there is another version, which states that "on one of the mountains in the range of Nallamala hills, eight *amadas* (an *amada* is equal to 12 miles in measure) from Srisaila *Kshetra*, Garuda commenced silent penance to obtain a vision of Lord Narasimha who destroyed Hiranyakasipu. The Lord in His grace, after long years of the *tapas* of Garuda, manifested Himself in the cave of a mountain".

"Ten 'Paruvus' (a *paruvu* is equal to two and a half miles) to the north-east of the mountain, Garuda was doing penance. A vision of His manifestation was then granted to Garuda, who after obtaining a sign of the location of the mountain-cave, gladly travelled thither and had the vision of the Lord Jwalanarasimha not easily accessible to common people. Garuda then worshipped the lord, and praised him that 'Ahobilam is *Mahabalam*' (Ahobilam endows us with great strength). The Lord's *Divya Mangala Vighraha* was worshipped by him with several *stotras*. Garuda then considered himself as blessed after a vision of the Lord. This divine place thereafter obtained the deserving name of Ahobilam".

*Vobula* is possibly the earliest name available about this place, occurring for the first time in an 8th century Chalukyan inscription<sup>16</sup>. *Vobula* is most probably the corrupt or even the vernacular Telugu form of the Sanskrit word *Ahobala*.

*Ahobalagiri* is Ahobala hill. As the place is situated on a hill, the name appears to be appropriate. Several inscriptions found in the surroundings of Ahobilam refer to Ahobilam by this name. The earliest record which refers to Ahobilam by this name occurs in an inscription of 1378 A.D.<sup>17</sup>

The *Garudadri*<sup>18</sup> is obviously explainable on the basis of Garuda's penance on this mountain. According to *Sthalapurana*<sup>19</sup> as per his father's (Kasyapa's) instruction, *Vainateya* (Garuda) in his boyhood performed a very great penance in this place i.e., Ahobilam and obtained the grace of the Lord for being a *Yahana* (the eternal vehicle) of Sri Mahavishnu. Hence the mountain is called *Garudadri* to signify this legendary incident.

According to *Sthalapurana*,<sup>20</sup> an *asura* (demon) called Somaka stole away the Vedas from Lord Brahma. Then they were restored by Lord Vishnu, after he killed the *Asura*. After this incident, the Vedas performed a severe penance in this place (Ahobilam) and Lord Narasimha who was pleased with their penance blessed them that thereafter they would not be stolen away by anybody else. To signify this occurrence the mountains are called "*Vedadri*". The earliest record which refers to Ahobilam by this name belongs to the year 1410 A.D.<sup>21</sup>

*Singa-vel-Kunram* 'seven hills', the abode of Narasimha. Saint Tirumangai *Alvar* who lived in the 8th century A.D. composed ten<sup>22</sup> Tamil poems in praise of the God. In the first poem, *Alvar* sings about *Sengan ali ittu erainjum singavel kunram*. *Singavel* meaning the youthful lion is, doubtless, a reference to Lord Narasimha who resides in the hill Ahobilam. It is for that reason the hill is named *Singavel* Hill. The words *Sengan Ali* (Ali means lion) also signify a red-eyed lion. The name *Nagari* appears in the earliest in an inscription of 1558 A.D.<sup>23</sup> This name is probably explainable as *mulasthanam* (the main abode of Narasimha in Upper Ahobilam).

Besides the names already mentioned appearing in the inscriptions, many *puranas* refer to Ahobilam by different names such as *Achalachaya Meru*, *Virakshetra*, *Sheshadri*, *Narsimhatirtham*, *Garudadri*, *Garudagiri* and *Garudachalam*.



### 3. Antiquities

Quite in line with the importance of this place as a holy centre, a whole range of paraphernalia appropriate in such places has been up here from time to time due to the philanthropic contributions of the devotees. As such, we have here about nine shrines, six *Koners* (tanks), thirteen holy *tirthas* (ponds), besides twelve *mandapas* and other structures built for the benefit and comfort of the visiting pilgrims. In short, Ahobilam is a well developed religious centre studded mainly with religious buildings, a study of which provides a good background for the understanding of the growth and development of this religious centre.

Among the significant monuments at Ahobilam the Ahobala Narasimha temple at the Upper Ahobilam and Prahladavarada temple at the Lower Ahobilam stand out by the sheer grandeur of their size and appearance. An elaborate discussion of these two temples is taken up later. Now, we may pass on to the description of the other antiquities of the place.

#### A. Nava - Narasimha shrines

##### I. Ahobila Narasimha shrine

The temple, situated on the Upper Ahobilam, at a distance of eight kms. from the Lower Ahobilam, is the main temple and the earliest of all the nine shrines. The Lord in the sanctum sanctorum here appears in his fierce aspect. Hence he is called *Ugra* Narasimha. He is the presiding deity of the temple and is also known as Ahobila Narasimha. It is firmly believed that Narasimha was 'Svayambhu' (self-manifest) here. (A detailed description of this "Svayambu" is taken up later in the succeeding chapters).

##### II. Bhargava Narasimha shrine

The Bhargava Narasimha shrine is situated at a distance of two kms. from the Lower Ahobilam on a hill, near the sacred pond, known as *Bhargava tirtham*. It is the site where Bhargava Rama performed his penance. Hence the Lord of the temple is known as Bhargava Narasimha.

The entire distance is to be covered on foot. At some distance down a deep incline, we come to a very calm place where we find a beautiful pond of cool, fresh and crystal clear water surrounded by ever-green thick shrubs and tall trees. The pond is also called *Akshaya Tirtha*. At a few yards away from this pond, there is a flight of some steps, climbing up which, we reach the Bhargava shrine, which is renovated recently.

The deity installed in the *Garbhagriha* is about 3' high and is placed on a low pedestal and is represented as four-handed, the upper two hands holding the *Chakra* and *Sankha*, the lower two hands are shown tearing the intestine of Hiranyakasipu. Hiranyakasipu is shown with a sword in his right hand. Prahlada is seen on the right in the *Sthanaka* posture with *Anjali hasta*.

The image is crude looking. But the presence of *Dasavatara* in the *Prabhavali* without *Kirtimukha* is interesting as it reminds us of the graceful and artistic images of 10th-11th century.

An inscription belonging to 1564 A.D.<sup>24</sup> was set up by Sri Parankusa Srivansatagopa Jiyyangaru, the presiding *acharya* of the Ahobila math. This registers the grant of a piece of land in Lingamdinne in Gandikotasima to the God Ahobalesvara for specified offerings and their distribution during the garden festival (*Vana-mahotsava*) near the tank constructed by him on the way to Bhargava shrine by Parankusa Van Satagopajiyyar who received the piece of land from Narasaya who in turn, stated to have obtained the village Lingamadinne from *Bandu* Timmaraju. The

inscription also mentions that the approach road and steps to Bhargava shrine were constructed by Parankusajiyar

### iii. Yogananda Narasimha

This shrine is at a distance of two kms to the south-east of Lower Ahobilam distance of two kms. The popular legend is that after killing Hiranyakasipu, Lord Narasimha taught Prahlada several yogic postures. Therefore, the lord in this posture is called Yogananda Narasimha. It is connected by a good road. This shrine is a plain stone structure with a square *Garbhagriha* and *ardhamandapa*. Seated on a Garuda pedestal of 1'2" high, the figure of the Lord is about 2'8" high in the yogic posture of the legs being crossed and tied with a *Yogapatta*. The deity is four handed and holds *Chakra* in the right upper hand and *Sankha* in the upper left hand. The other two hands rest on the knees. The form of *Sankha* and *Chakra*, the hand postures, the conical *kirita* and the style of the delineation show that this image is possibly of the 9th - 10th century A.D.

There is another Yogananda idol in a cave, *Prahladabanda* in the Upper Ahobilam. This cave is in the upper reach of a lofty mountain. This figure is similar to the one mentioned already, except for such aspects like the slender body, style of holding *Sankha* and *Chakra*, the low pointed *kirita*, crude face and large ear. These peculiar aspects point out that this image may be earlier than the one referred to earlier and possibly might belong to the 7th - 8th century A.D. (PL. 67)

### iv. Chatravata Narasimha

The shrine of *Chatravata* is about four kms away from the lower Ahobilam, on the same motorable road leading to Yogananda. But we have to walk about a furlong on a rough track from the road to reach this shrine. The temple is small and is under the shade of an umbrella-like banyan tree. Hence the deity here is called *Chatravata* Narasimha. This shrine has a square *Garbhagriha* and a *mukha mandapa*. This *mukha mandapa* has six pillars, which consists of a simple rectangular lower part from which rises octagonal and square shaft and a plain capital. This is typical of the 12th century A.D. pillars in temples in all parts of South India. Bas-relief sculptures of Narasimha, Anjaneya etc are found on these pillars.

The deity carved in black basaltic stone is seated in the *padmasana* pose on a low *padmapitha*. The two upper hands hold the *Chakra* and *Sankha*. The lower right hand is in the *abhaya* posture, while the lower left hand is a *Katihasta*, placed on the waist and the left thigh. The image is adorned with *Kirita makuta*, *graveyaka*, *Keyura*, *Yanjanopavita* and a drapery. The ornamentation, workmanship, depiction of *Sankha* and *Chakra*, the way of showing the four hands, drapery and the style of delineation suggest that, stylistically the image belongs to the early Vijayanagara period. It is said that the two Gandharvas Haha and Huhu from *Meruparvata* and entertained this Narasimha with their melodious singing, where upon, the Lord blessed them to become first rate singers in all the three worlds. Even now devotees who visit this shrine sing melodiously before the deity.

### v. Kroda or Varaha Narasimha

The shrine of *Varaha* Narasimha is one km away from the main temple of Ahobila Narasimha of the Upper Ahobilam. Walking along side the Bhavanasini river east-wards and *Kalakshepa mandapa*, we arrive at the cave shrine of *Kroda (Varaha)*. Here we get entranced by the attractive natural scenery all around. The lofty mountains over-grown with trees are awe inspiring. The narrow valley between *Vedari* and *Guradadri*, the silver stream of *Bhavanasini* glides on forms the *Varahagundam*.

In this cave shrine, there are two images, one of Lakshmi-Narasimha and another *Sihanaka* figure of *Varaha* Narasimha with his consort, goddess *Bhudevi*. The goddess is shown as embracing

the 'snout' portion of the lord, just as she did while being raised by him from the ocean waters after piercing Hiranyaksha with his tusks and then slaying him. Varaha is in a *tribhanga* posture with only two hands, the head of the boar and the tail of the lion on a human torso. The image is bereft of any ornamentation. Stylistically the image may be placed in the period about 9th-10th centuries. A.D.

#### vi. Karanja or Saranga Narasimha

This shrine is situated at a distance of one km. from the upper Ahobilam and one furlong away from the road leading to lower Ahobilam. The *Bhavanasini* river glides on at the left of the road. The shrine is under a *Karanja* tree which accounts for the name Karanja Narasimha. The shrine is a simple rectangular structure of granite slabs.

The image of the Lord appears to be seated in meditation, with a hooded cobra over the head. The upper right hand holds a *Chakra* and upper left hand has *Saranga* or bow. The lower hands are in *Dhyana mudra*. Stylistically the image may be placed in the period about 10th-11th centuries A.D.

#### vii. Malola Narasimha

*Malola* shrine is situated, nearly two kms. from the main temple of the Upper Ahobilam. The deity here appears in 'Soumya' (peaceful) form. As Narasimha is seen with his consort, Lakshmi, He is known as *Malola* Narasimha. The word '*Malola*' means beloved of Lakshmi. (*ma*=Lakshmi, *lola*=beloved)

The shrine is on a level surface of a peak of the Veadri mountain. This place is also called *Markonda Lakshmi Kshetra*.

वेदाद्रे शिखरे एवै लक्ष्मीकोटमुदाहृतम् ।

तत्रास्ते भगवान् विष्णु लक्ष्म्या सह नृकेसरी ॥

The God is seen seated here in *sukhasana* posture with his left leg folded while the right leg is shown dangling at an angle with a semi circular *Prabhavali* and a raised *Kirtimukha*. The goddess is shown seated on the left thigh of the Lord with *kataka* and *parisaritya vamahasta*. The feet of the goddess are on *padma* which appears to have sprouted from the earth. The Lord's two upper hands hold *Chakra* and *Sankha*, his lower right hand is in *abhaya* pose and the lower left hand is shown embracing his consort.

The semi-circular *prabhavali* with a raised *Kirtimukha*, over-ornamentation, crude bodily features of the goddess, the elongated *kirita makuta*, the style of holding *sankha* and *chakra*, suggest that the image may belong to the 12th-13th century A.D.

#### viii. Jwala Narasimha

The temple of *Jwala* Narasimha, lies higher up the *Malola* temple, on a hill called '*Achalachaya Meru*'. This is about four kms. from the upper Ahobilam temple. This place is said to be the actual spot where the ferocity or anger of the Lord reached its acme when he tore Hiranyakasipu. It is somewhat difficult to reach this place as we have to pass through a narrow passage made by cutting and chiselling the rocks of the peak on one side, while in the other side of this passage there is a very deep valley. One has to walk very carefully. It is told that the spot where *Jwala* Narasimha is sitting with Hiranyakasipu on his lap, is the threshold of the main entrance door of the spacious palace of Hiranyakasipu. Cleaving one of the pillars of the demon's palace, Narasimha manifested himself. The part of this pillar standing erect has the shape of a lofty hill. This vertical hilly pillar is called *Achalachayameru*. The cleaven side of the standing part is straight and the right angles to the foot part of it. On the precipice of this peak, there are three steel posts erected. On the surface of these steel posts, the names of the devotees erecting them are engraved.

It is generally believed that after slaying Hiranyakasipu, Narasimha looked very frightful. To pacify him, Indra and other gods poured *suraganga* water (celestial Ganges) on his head which flowed down as a stream into the nearby valley and the latter turned into a river called *Bhavanasini*. In front of this shrine, there is a small pond below a fully open lotus. The water of this pond is reddish. The colour of the water is said to be due to Narasimha's washing his hands here after tearing the abdomen of Hiranyakasipu.

The shrine appears to be a natural cave. There are three idols in the shrine, a *Ashtabuja* Narasimha b. *Chaturbuja* Narasimha and Narasimha chasing Hiranyakasipu.

#### a. Ashtabuja Narasimha

The main deity seated at the centre is with eight arms. He is seated on a *Garudapitha* and a small image of Prahlada is placed to the left of Narasimha, standing with folded hands.

The sculpture suggests massive energy and vigorous action. The first pair of hands catches the crown of Hiranyakasipu's crown and renders him motionless, while the other pair by tightly gripping the sword-carrying hand of Hiranyakasipu, completely disarms and overpowers him. The second pair of hands is engaged in tearing open the entrails of the demon lying on the folded right leg of the God. The third pair of hands hold *Sankha* and *Chakra* and fourth pair holds the intestine of the demon in the shape of a garland. A *prabhavali* with *kirtimukha* is carved in the stone.

Stylistically this image goes back to the early Vijayanagara period.

#### b. Chaturbuja

This figure is depicted in the standing posture coming out of the pillar (*Stambhodbhava-murti*). This is said to represent the *Kevala* Narasimha form. This is a very rare form and appears to be earlier. It has four hands, the two upper hands holding *chakra* and *sankha* the lower hands are depicted downwards though he is tearing the demon. The demon is not depicted. Lakshmi is seated to the right and Prahlada stands to the left and the god is adorned with *Karandamakuta*. Stylistically this image appears to be earlier than the above and may belong to the 7th-8th century A.D.

The third figure depicts Narasimha as advancing towards Hiranyakasipu from the right, as the latter is approaching in a defiant attitude, with his sword lifted up to strike. Narasimha is made to take hold of the body of Hiranyakasipu so as to overpower him. Moreover the right hand of Narasimha is held up as if he is going to deal a blow to the enemy with the open palm of the hand.

The conventional lion's face, the conical *kirita*, the expressionless attitude and other details place the image to the 10th-11th centuries A.D.

#### ix. Pavana Narasimha

*Pavana* Narasimha shrine is situated on the bank of the river *Pavani* and it is about six kms. from the upper Ahobilam temple. One has to walk the entire distance from upper Ahobilam southwards, on a hilly forest track. This shrine is in the middle of a dense forest.

The shrine is a small rectangular building with a *Garudastambha* in front. The presence of *Garudastambha* suggests that the shrine might have been in great prosperity and annual functions were being regularly conducted. There is another shrine, opposite to this, dedicated to Siva.

At a distance of about a km. from this shrine, *Chenchus*, (tribal people) reside. They, even to this day, sing in their own language the momentous marriage of the Chenchu bride with Narasimha.

In the shrine, just by the side of the main image Pavananarasimha, there are images of Gopalakrishna, Navanithakrishna, Varadaraja, Anjaneya and another Parnuletinarasimha.

The main image is actually a Lakshmi Narasimha idol, with four hands. The upper two hands carry *Sankha* and *Chakra*. The lower right hand is in *abhaya* pose, while the lower left hand is shown as embracing Lakshmi seated on his thigh. The lord is seated in *sukhasana* posture. *Adishesha*, with his left leg folded while the right leg is spread on the knee. Dangling down over the head of Narasimha is found a seven-hooded snake (*Adishesha*) spread like an umbrella. Lakshmi is shown seated on the thigh of the Lord with right hand embracing god. But the left hand is a little bit broken.

This form of image has sanction from the *Vishnudharmottara* and stylistically this image belongs to the period of the 6th-7th century A.D.

#### B. Ukku Stambham (Iron pillar) or Ugra Stambham

At a distance of eight kms. from the upper Ahobilam, we can see a cleft of the mountain dividing itself into two visible parts. It is a long-held view that from the cleft, the lord appeared in the form of Narasimha and this cleft is known as '*Ugra Stambham*'. The pathway to this place is a very arduous one. There is a small pillar of iron here on the cleavage of a mountain to commemorate the event.

#### C. Prahlada Murti

The small shrine situated on the hill is in between *Ugra Stambham* and the upper Ahobilam. It is dedicated to Prahlada. The images of Narasimha and Prahlada are installed in a small cave.

#### D. Mandapas and Pushkarnis (ponds)

Besides the above monuments, there are a number of *mandapas* dotting the hill and its lower part. The *Ahobilam* and *Rudravaram* Kaifiyats list 12 *mandapas*, 12 *tirthams*/*Gundams* and 11 *Koners*.

The twelve *mandapas* distributed in the Lower and the Upper Ahobilam are *Vasanta mandapa*, *Unjal mandapa*, *Koluvu mandapa*, *Visvakshana mandapa*, *Mrtasangrahana mandapa*, *Bigala Anjaneya mandapa*, *Durudu mandapa*, *Raghupati mandapa*, *Bhairava mandapa*, *Udyoga mandapa* and a hundred and sixteen pillared *mandapa* and *Varaha mandapa*.

#### I. Vasanta mandapa

This *mandapa* which is square in shape measuring 12'7"x12'7" and located at a furlong distance from the Lower Ahobilam temple, consists of four pillars. The *adhithana* is 2'4" high with a panel of dancing girls. An inscription belonging to 1548 A.D.<sup>25</sup> states that Narasamma, wife of *Mahamandalesvara* Goburi Vobaya, constructed a *Vasanta mandapam* to the north of *Diguva Tirupati*, endowed 120 gold *Varahas* to the temple as a principal amount and the recurring interest, is to be utilized for offerings (*Naivedyams*) to the god Ahobaleswara, when the *Utsava Vighraha*, the idol used in ceremonial processions visits the lower Ahobilam and waits at the *Vasanta mandapam* during occasions such as, *Nityotsava*, (daily function), *Pakshotsava*, (fortnightly function) *Masotsava* (monthly function) and *Samvatsarotsavas* (annual functions).

#### II. Unjal mandapa

The pillars in the *mandapa* are and bear the imprint of the Vijayanagara style of architecture.

This is situated opposite to the entrance gate of the lower Ahobilam temple in the *sannidhi*. This *mandapam* is occasionally used during *unjalevai* functions. This is a simple square

mandapa measuring 9'x9' with four pillars. The Adhistana is 1'6" high from the earth. Pillars are very tall having square base, circular shaft and in the capital a neck-moulding (*padmabandham*) has been introduced. The *Padmabandham* joins on the shaft, thus appropriating to itself a segment of the upper part of the shaft, and adding another item to the lower part of the capital in the form of a vessel or pot. As to the abacus, the palagai plank is much expanded, in order to combine with the flower shape underneath and it is the most striking element. This pillar is an example of the Chola style. An inscription stone is placed near this mandapa.

### III. Koluvu mandapa

This is located, a few yards next to *unjal mandapam* towards the east. This is slightly bigger than *unjal mandapam*. This is situated by the side of the present bus stop on the Allagadda Road. Occasionally on festival days, God is brought in a procession and is placed in this mandapa for sometime. The mandapa is square in shape measuring 15'10"x15'10", and the height of the Adhistana is 3'8". These pillars belong to the Vijayanagara style.

### IV. Visvaksena mandapa

This is also called *mudra mandapa* and situated on the other side of the main road (Allagadda road). The mandapa, which measures 12'7"x12'7", has four pillars of the Vijayanagara style and at present, is used as a shelter for the local people. The mandapa stands on high adhistana measuring 5' from the earth. The adhistana is very decorative consisting panels of dancing girls.

During the festival times, the idol of Visvaksena is brought here and offered puja, and taken in a procession to the temple again. We do not have any definitive knowledge about the shrine behind the mudra mandapam. We may presume that this mandapa might have acted as 'entry control' place.

### v. Mrtasangrahana mandapa

This is located a few yards, to the east of Visvaksena mandapa. During special festival times, earth is collected from this place. The mandapa is square in shape measuring 12'7"x12'7" with an adhistana of 2'8" high. The pillars appear to belong to the early Vijayanagara period.

### vi. Bigala Anjaneyasvami mandapa

This is two furlongs away from the Lower Ahobilam temple. There is a 6' Anjaneya idol in the centre and also a processional image. It is recently renovated. The mandapa measures 13'8"x13'8".

According to the local tradition, the main keys of the Ahobilam temple were deposited in the feet of Anjaneya, after the daily pujas were over and the Chief priest used to collect the keys in the morning from this place. ('Bigala' in Telugu means 'keys').

### vii. Durudu mandapa

'Durudu' means in Telugu 'to pass through'. It is said that, before constructing the concrete road to the Upper Ahobilam, people used to pass through this mandapa to reach the Upper Ahobilam.

The ghat road from the lower Ahobilam slowly winds its way with an abundant sylvan pomp on both sides to the Upper Ahobilam. On the way to the Upper Ahobilam, is the Durudu mandapa on the Sopana marga. This is a plain mandapa which has sixteen pillars, eight on each side. There is an inscription on a slab near this mandapa. This inscription registers an endowment of twenty Varahas by Polivuttu for maintaining offerings during the sixteen days of festivals every year, when God was staying in this 16 pillared mandapa, while going down to Lower Ahobilam on procession and back. The mandapa was built by Kurucheti Venktadrive - maharaju in 1553 A.D.

The pillars in the mandapa are plain without any special architectural features.

#### viii. Raghupati mandapa

This is also a sixteen pillared mandapa with a bigger dimension. The inscriptional<sup>26</sup> slab set up near this mandapa records the grant of a piece of land and some money by Van-Satagopa Jiyar for conducting certain festivals (16-day festival) when god Ahobaleswara is seated during procession in the 16 pillared mandapa from the temple to the Lower Ahobilam and back. This mandapa is said to have been constructed by Mahamandalesvara Kurucheti Timmaraju, in 1558 A.D. The pillars in the mandapa exhibit the Vijayanagara style of architecture. These pillars have ornamental brackets forming part of their capitals, as found in every stage of the Dravidian order. This is situated next to Durudu mandapa on the way to the Upper Ahobilam and measures 24'6"x24'6". There is a 3'5" Anjaneya idol in the centre.

#### ix. Bairava mandapa

Bairava mandapa is located to the west of the ghat road to the Upper Ahobilam. As we go up the hill, we notice a waterfall on the left of the mountains and there is a Gundam (water collected in the low lying area) by name Bairava Gundam. In it water collects from the stream flowing down the mountains. Opposite to the Bairavagundam is a long corridor mandapa with sixteen pillars. Deep inside this mandapa is a four pillared structure, where an image of Van Satagopa Jiyar in dhyana mudra is seated. These pillars have early Vijayanagara features.

#### x. Udyoga mandapa

Climbing up a stone - stepped staircase about four metres wide, we arrive at a level area surrounded by three mountains of the Ahobilam range of mountains. On the Western extreme is the Udyoga mandapa. This is a 16-pillared mandapa measuring 24'x24' in the typical Vijayanagara style. The adhistana is 4'9" high. This might belong to the late Vijayanagara period.

#### xi. Kalakshepa mandapa

This mandapa is situated near Varaha shrine. Walking further up from the Upper Ahobilam shrine, east-wards along side the river for about 200 yards on a rough track of boulders, we find this one hundred and sixteen-pillared mandapa walled in only on the western side. The pillars are all plain and simple and may belong to the 11th-12th centuries A.D. or to the early Vijayanagara period.

#### xii. Varaha mandapa

Walking further upwards from Kalakshepa mandapa, this mandapa is situated adjacent to the Varaha shrine. This is in a dilapidated condition. The mandapa consists of sixteen pillars, beautifully carved and sculptured. Though the pillars exhibit the 16-17th century features, each pillar is distinct.

Another remarkable group of monuments, if they can be called so, seen here is that of Gundams/Tirthams and Pushkaranis or Koners (water ponds). Twelve of these are considered as sacred tirthas or gundams. They are the Bairava gundam, Narasimha tirtham, Varaha Gundam, Chuta tirtham, Sudarsana tirtham, Vinayaka tirtham, Dara tirtham, Sankhu tirtham, Gajendra Gundam, Rama-Lakshmana tirtham, Bhima tirtham and Gundam.

Among those described above, there are eight pushkaranis or koners (ponds). They are Sannidhi koneru, Alvar koneru, Lanja koneru, Bhargava koneru in the Lower Ahobilam; Sannidhi koneru, Uttamadugu koneru, Akulapapaiah koneru, in the Upper Ahobilam and a koneru near Malola shrine.

## E. Konerus

### i. Sannidhi Koneru (Lower Ahobilam)

This koneru is on the southern side of the Lower Ahobilam temple. The mandapas surrounding the *pushkarinis* are in a dilapidated condition and these housed vedic schools formerly. Recently this koneru is renovated by the present Jiyar of the Ahobila math. This tank is always dry and a deep well is dug within the tank. This pond measures 190'x182'10" outside and 143'4"x117'8" inside.

D.Ramaswamy Iyengar (1916) says that "Some years ago, one Jangalapalli Aswath Reddy, a devotee, constructed a feeder channel for the *pushkarini* to store the rain water". But it appears that the feeder channel had proved useless owing to the percolative nature of the sub soil. The mandapas around the tank are sinking into the ground due to the negligence and indifference of the temple authorities. The well in this tank retains water during a major part of the year. But they are muddy and infected with bacteria.

According to local *Kaifiyat*, this tank is said to have been constructed by Krishnadevaraya.

### ii. Alvar koneru

This koneru is at a distance of two furlongs to the west of the Lower Ahobilam temple. It has flights of steps all round like the *Sannidhi koneru*. But they are in a dilapidated condition. As D.Ramaswamy Iyengar (1916) says, "this tank started during the time of Krishnadevaraya and the work was completed in Sadasivaraya's time. Round the bund of this tank there is a huge embankment provided with a rivetment. This embankment is a very fine one and is called *Alvar-katta*. It preserves rain water silting up the tank. This tank is 156'x138' in dimension and was used for the *Brahmothsava* festival. On the bund, there is a number of monolithic stone reservoirs formerly used for storing water for the cattle<sup>27</sup>. This tank retains water throughout the year. There is a well dug within this tank as in the *sannidhi koneru*.

### iii. Lanja koneru

This koneru is at a distance of a few yards away from the Lower Ahobilam temple towards north-eastern side. This tank retains no water even during the rainy season. It is believed that this was constructed by a prostitute (*Lanja*) and is called *Lanja-koneru*.

### iv. Bhargava koneru

This is the smallest of the tanks in the Lower Ahobilam. It retains water throughout the year as it is by a perennial spring. This is situated 3 kms. from the lower Ahobilam temple, closely surrounded by forest adjacent to Bhargava shrine. An inscription dated 1564 A.D.,<sup>28</sup> registers that this tank was constructed by Parankusa Van Satakopa Jiyar.

### v. Akulapapaiah koneru

This is on the way to the Upper Ahobilam on the *sopana margam*. At present, this is totally covered with thick green vegetation.

### vi. Uttamadugu koneru

This is five kms. from the Lower Ahobilam and is situated on the road side in Upper Ahobilam.

### vii. Sannidhi Koneru (Upper Ahobilam)

The ghat road to Ahobilam leads to the west. As we go up the hill, we notice a waterfall on the left in the mountains and there is a tank called *Sannidhi koneru* where the water collects from the



streams flowing down the mountains. The size of the tank is 61'x82'6" with 22 steps on three sides. Opposite to the tank, there is a long corridor *mandapa* with sixteen pillars.

This tank and *mandapa* are magnificent and are partly hewn out of the mountains.

**viii. Small koneru (near Malola shrine)**

This is two kms. away from the Upper Ahobilam situated adjacent to the Malola shrine. The size of the tank is 24'10"x13'.

Apart from antiquities described already, there are many chattrams and they are, *Papalamma Chattram, Konda Reddy Chattram, Ganthi Guruvayya Chattram, Kotapudu Chattram, Vobalampalli Chattram, Suddapalli Lakshamma Chattram, Pedda Pasupala Chattram, Chenchia Chattram, Kammara Chattram* and *Gundupapala Chattram*.

These *chattrams* are located in *Sannidhi* street in the Lower Ahobilam and are in a dilapidated condition. Some chattrams are used as shelter and some as shops and many of them are in a ruined state. At present, these are used as free-feeding places for non-brahmin community during the special festival times.

Through such benefactions as described already, the religious devotion of generations of people has made Ahobilam a centre of ardent pilgrimage.

## NAMES OF THE PLACE

S.No.	Names of the Place	Inscriptional Reference	Literary Reference
1.	Vobula	E.I Vol.38.No.56 C. ■■ Cent. A.D.	—
2.	Ahobala	S.I.I. Vol. IX. No. 207 1124 A.D.	
3.	Ahobila	—	Nrisimhapuranam Bramhandapuranam Kasikandam Ahobilam Kaifiyat
4.	Ahobilagiri	Inscriptions of Andhra- desa Vol.II, Part I, Guntur Taluk, No. 196., P. 247 - 1378 A.D.	—
5.	Vedadri	S.I. I Vol. X No. 577 P. 319 - 1410 A.D.	Bramhandapuranam, Nrisimhapuranam
6.	Diguva Tirupati	S.I.I., Vol. XVI. No. ■■ 1532 A.D.	—
7.	Garudadri	—	Bramhandapuranam
8.	Virakshetram	—	Bramhandapuranam
9.	Achalachayameru	—	Bramhandapuranam
10.	Singa-Vel-Kundram	— Prabandham	Nalayira Divya
11.	Nidhi	S.I.I. Vol. XVI. No. 271 1538 A.D.	—
12.	Nagari	S.I.I. Vol. XVI, No. 235 1538 A.D.	—

# THE SHRINES, MANDAPAS AND KONERS

(Chronologically arranged)

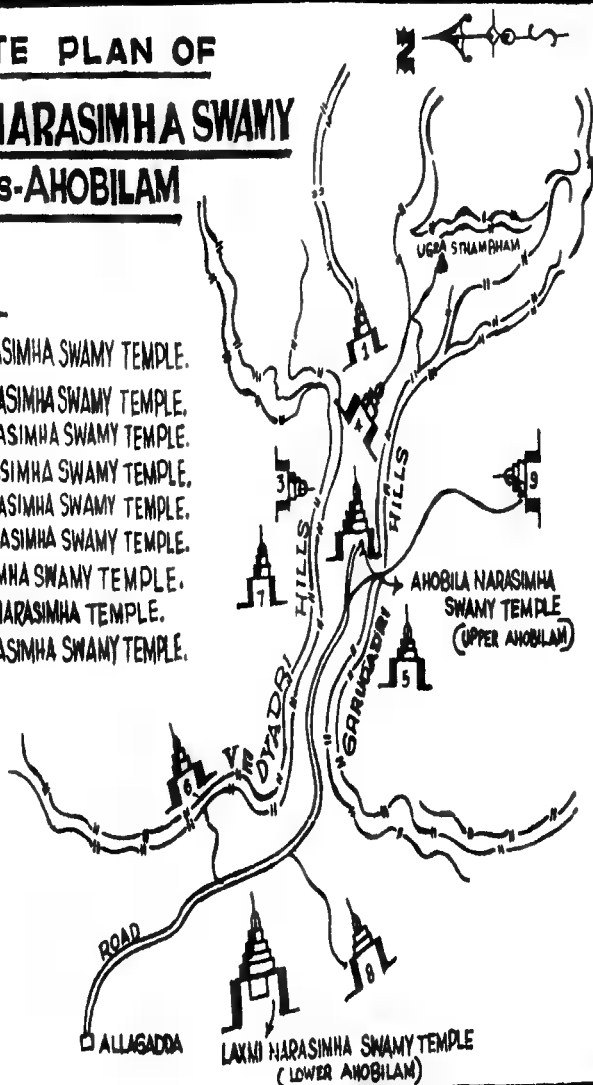
S.NO.	NAMES	DATES
<b>A. SHRINES</b>		
I	Ahobila Narasimha Shrine	C. 2nd-3rd Century A.D.
II	Pavana Narasimha Shrine	C. 6th-7th Century A.D.
III	Kroda ■ Varaha Narasimha Shrine	C. 7th-8th Century A.D.
IV	Yogananda Narasimha Shrine	C. 7th-8th Century A.D.
V	Jwala Narasimha Shrine	C. 7th-8th Century A.D.
VI	Karanja or Saranga Narasimha Shrine	C. 10th-11th Century A.D.
VII	Bhargava Narasimha Shrine	C. 10th-11th Century A.D.
VIII	Malola Narasimha Shrine	C. 12th-13th Century A.D.
IX	Chatravata Narasimha Shrine	Early Vijayanagara Period
X	Prahladavarada Narasimha Shrine (L.A.)	Saluva Narasimha's Time
<b>B. MANDAPAS</b>		
I	Unjal Mandapa	C. 9th-10th Century A.D.
II	Koluvu Mandapa	C. 1500 A.D.
III	Visvaksena Mandapa	C. 1500 A.D.
IV	Vasantha Mandapa	1548 A.D.
V	Durudu Mandapa	1553 A.D.
VI	Raghupati Mandapa	1558 A.D.
VII	Mritti Sangraha Mandapa	Early Vijayanagara Period
VIII	Bairava Mandapa	Early Vijayanagara Period
IX	Kalkshepa Mandapa	C. 11th-12th Century A.D. (or) Early Vijayanagara Period
X	Varaha Mandapa	C. 16th-17th Century A.D. (or) Late Vijayanagara Period
XI	Udyoga Mandapa	Late Vijayanagara Period
XII	Bigala Anjeneyaswamy Mandapa	—
<b>C. KONERS (POONDS)</b>		
I	Sannidhi Koneru (L.A.)	Krishnadevaraya Period
II	Alwar Koneru	C. 16th Century A.D.
III	Lanja Koneru	—
IV	Bhargava Koneru	—
V	Akulapapaiah Koneru	1564 A.D.
VI	Uttamadugu Koneru	—
VII	Sanni Koneru (U.A.)	—
VIII	Malola Shrine	—

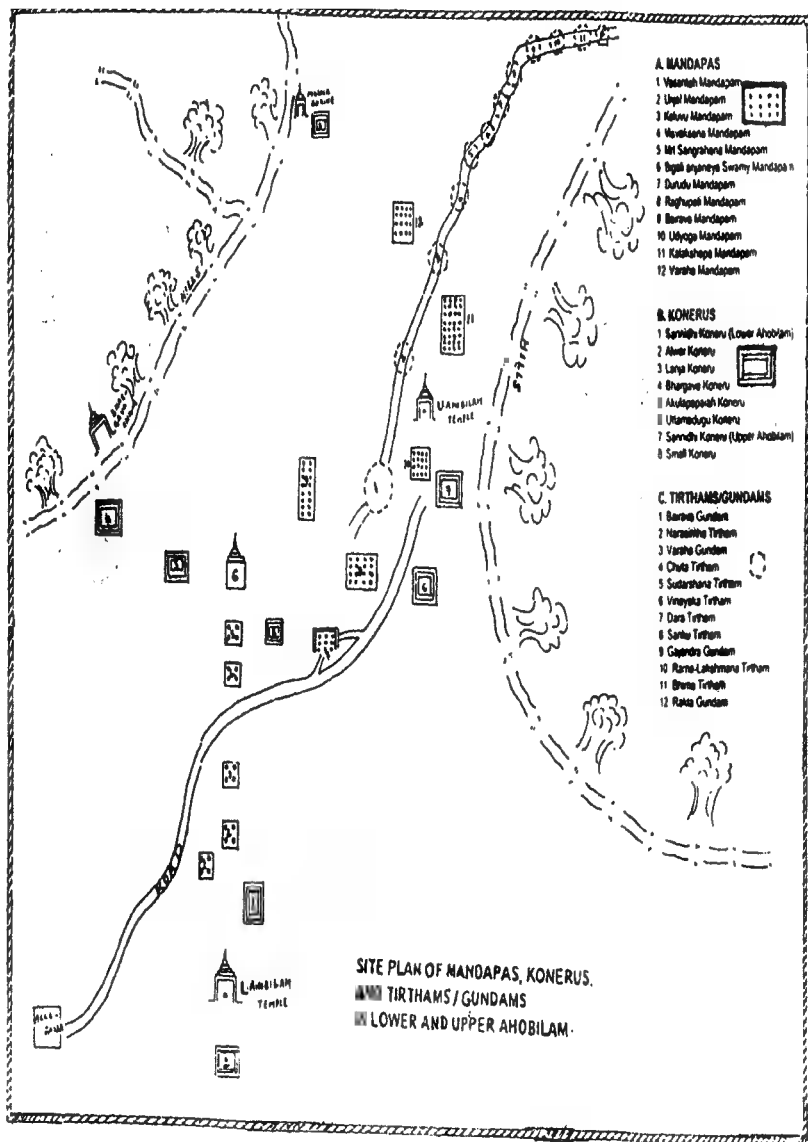
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# SITE PLAN OF NAVA NARASIMHA SWAMY TEMPLES-AHOBILAM

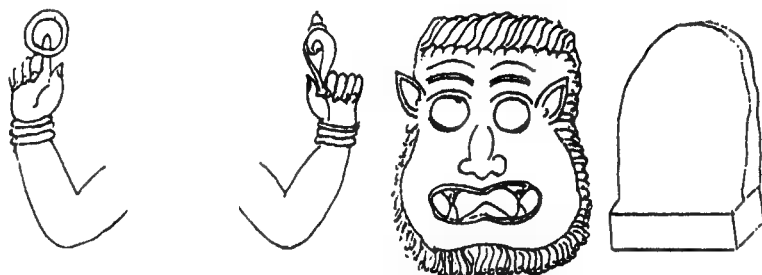
## REFERENCE

1. JWALA NARASIMHA SWAMY TEMPLE.
2. AHOBILA NARASIMHA SWAMY TEMPLE.
3. MALOLA NARASIMHA SWAMY TEMPLE.
4. CRODA NARASIMHA SWAMY TEMPLE.
5. KARENJA NARASIMHA SWAMY TEMPLE.
6. BHARGAVA NARASIMHA SWAMY TEMPLE.
7. YOGA NARASIMHA SWAMY TEMPLE.
8. CHATRAVATA NARASIMHA TEMPLE.
9. PAWANA NARASIMHA SWAMY TEMPLE.

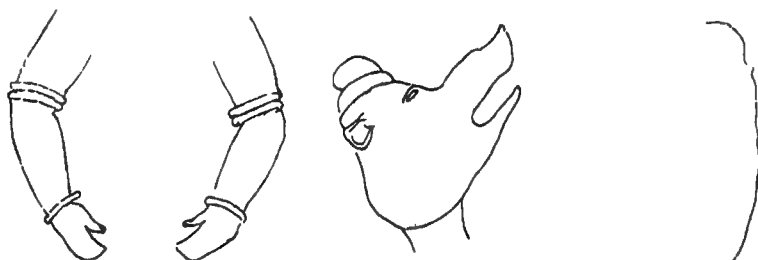




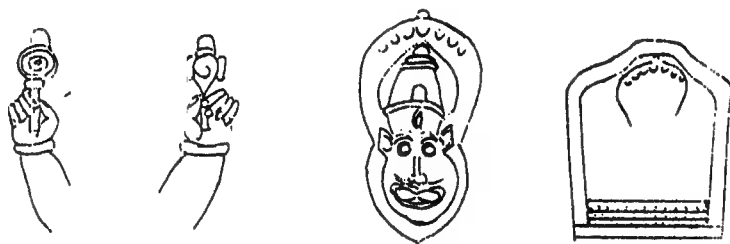
**SKETCHES SHOWING THE DETAILS OF THE DELINEATION OF THE NARASIMHA ICONS**  
 (Please ■ the colour plates also for the icons)



■ Narasimha tearing Hiranyakasipu



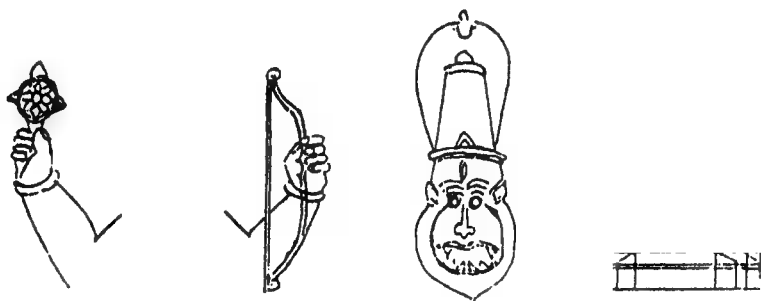
Bhu-Varaha-Narasimha



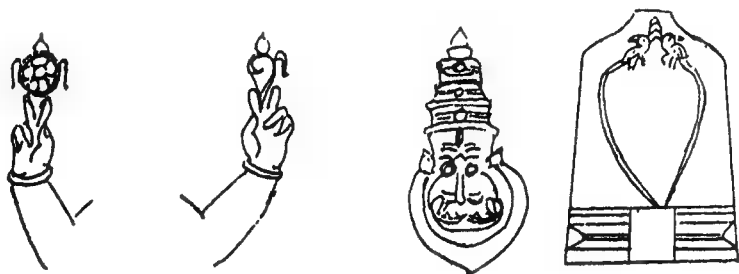
Pavana-Narasimha



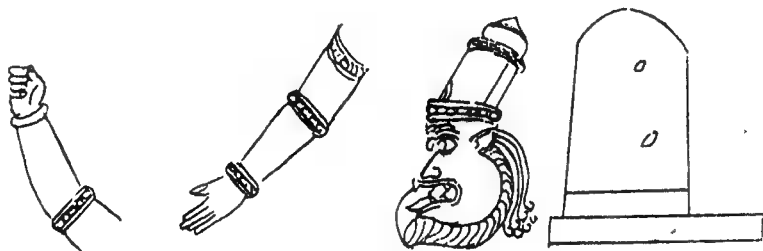
Yoga-Narasimha (near Prahalada mettu)



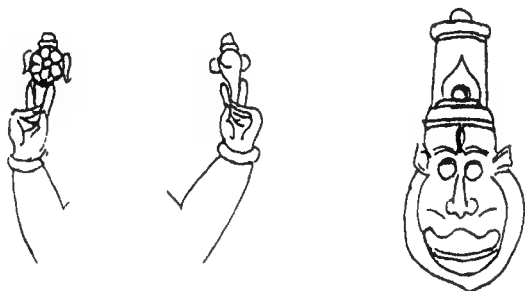
Karanja-Narasimha



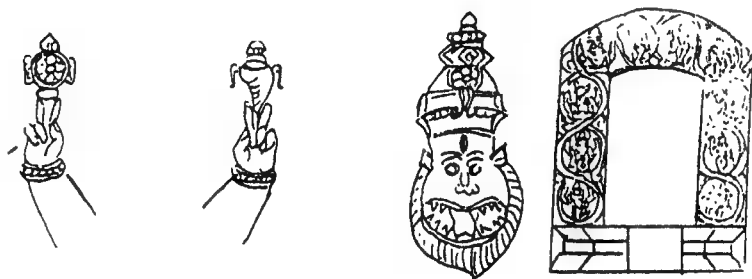
Jwala-Narasimha (Chaturbhuja)



Narasimha chasing Hiranyakasipu

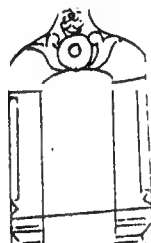


Yoga-Narasimha (Lower Ahobilam)

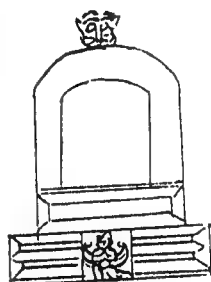


Bhargava-Narasimha





**Malola-Narasimha**



**Jwala-Narasimha (Ashtabhuj)**



**Chatravata-Narasimha**

In order to understand the significance and the historical situation that promoted the rise of Ahobilam as a prominent Narasimha centre, a brief account of the history of the region is very helpful. This region situated in the south of the Deccan plateau witnessed the play of successive historical forces that had been operating here from very early times.

### 1. Pre-history

The district of Kurnool abounds in several pre-historic sites. Several paleolithic implements and weapons are found in the beds of the Kunderu and the Sagileru, the high ground lying between the river Gundlakamma and the depression of Markapur taluk region.

Traces of microlithic culture were revealed by the discovery of some scattered fragments of light and dark coloured chert along the banks of the Madhyapur and the Ullamoor streams, a number of agates near Iskagundam, a microlithic site near Dhone below the railway bridge on the road to Kurnool and cores and flakes at Peapally (Pyapali). Microliths were also noticed on the high ground lying between the Gundlakamma and the depression of Markapur taluk, Siddepalle, Gajulapalle (Gazulapalle) and Gundla Brahmeswaram.

The remains of the neolithic age were brought to light at Kodumur (Kodumuru), Veludurthy (Veldurti), Pattikonda and Ternekallu (Teranikallu) where the finds comprised mostly flints and stones. The existence of megalithic culture was revealed by the discovery of burials termed variously as circles, stone circles, cists, cairns, dolmen and menhirs at Cumbum, Janpalacheruvu, Gajalakonda (Gajalakonda) railway station, Yerragondapalem, the Arella-Marella Gutta in the west of Nandikotkur and at Giddalur and Markapur taluks. When some of these burial sites were unearthed, bones and potsherds were found, while some comprised sarcophagi containing bones and earth mixed with decayed grain.

Besides these, two groups of caves, the Billasargam and the Yerrazangabbi caves, of great archaeological interest exist in Kurnool district. On examination, the Billasargam group was found to be ossiferous. One of the caves in this group yielded bones of rhinoceros, horse, bison and some extinct fauna long ago. Pottery was also found below the surface and evidences of human habitation abounded in the shape of cut-bones, of which 200 were implements like awls, arrow-heads, barbed and unbarbed knives and scrapers. The Yerrazangabbi group did not yield human bones, though considerable excavation was carried on there.

In order to gain a good understanding and appreciation of the ambitions and activities of the major dynasties which created an impact on this district in the course of both peace and war, it may be helpful to attempt a geographical placement of Kurnool district in the wider historical region, the vicissitudes underwent through the centuries. Kurnool district in the ancient times, appears to have formed part of Andhra and Karnataka. In modern times, the portion included in Karnataka became gradually merged with the portion in Andhra which was again an influential political division of ancient India<sup>1</sup>

## 2. Early-history

In view of these facts, it would be necessary here to deal with the political history of Rayalasima in brief, for the political history forms the skeleton of the area which in course of time gets fleshed out by its culture. The dynasty-wise political history of the kings in each dynasty with their contributions for the growth of culture is presented in the following sections

### 3. The Mauryas (C 324 -187 B C)

The region, in all probability, was included in the Mauryan empire. The existence of Asokan inscriptions at Yerragudi and Rajula-mandagiri in the Pattikonda taluk of Kurnool district in the neighbourhood and the references in an Asokan stupa at Kanchi by Huen Tsaing, who visited the city in the first half of the 7th century AD, to indicate that the territory lying between the two places formed part of Asoka's dominions<sup>2</sup>. According to the XIII rock-edict of Asoka, the Andhras were within the Mauryan imperial domain. Megasthenes, the Greek ambassador in the Mauryan court also noted that the Andhras supplied a large army to the Mauryans<sup>3</sup>. It may be said that the Rayalasima was been a part of Asokan dominion, as Jonnagiri which is twelve miles away from Rajula-Mandagiri is identified as Suvamagiri, a seat of Mauryan viceroyalty. The major and minor rock edicts of Asoka discovered in Rayalasima were meant to carry the 'Dharma' of Asoka to the people of this area.

### 4. The Satavahanas (C 235 B C - 225 A D)

After the decline of the Mauryas, the Andhra region came under the sway of the Satavahanas, the feudatory chiefs of the Mauryans. They declared independence in this region and their rule lasted for four centuries which included Rayalasima. The mention of *Sattahani-ratha* in the Myakadoni (Makadone in Adoni Taluk, Kurnool district) inscriptions of Pulumavi IV, the existence of *Satavahana-kota* (Satanikota in Nandikotkur taluk of Kurnool district) clearly indicate that the neighbouring districts of Kurnool were under the rule of Andhra Satavahana kings. Their authority seemed to have extended south-eastwards into the Cuddapah district.

The earliest mention of the Srisailem hill, a historical place in Kurnool district is recorded in Nasik inscription<sup>4</sup> of Gautami Balasri. It also makes a mention of the Satavahana ruler, Gautamiputra Satakarni, who was the ruler of several countries and mountains including the Western and the Eastern ghats. It also mentions that Satakarni was the ruler of Mulaka, identified with *Muliknadu*, a part of Rayalasima in Cuddapah district. "The term 'Mulki' is *Mulka-nadu* is reminiscent of the *Mulkis*, an Andhra tribe who lived in the neighbourhood of Parthian on the banks of Godavari, in the time of Buddha. It is not unlikely that the Mulkis had to move southwards beyond the Srisaile range in search of new homes, unable to bear the pressure of the barbarians who swept over the Deccan after the disappearance of the Satavahanas"<sup>5</sup>.

The inscriptions and literature of this period describe that the Satavahana kings practised religious tolerance. The Vedic Brahminism, the Buddhism and the Jainism flourished in their kingdom. Though these kings, patronised Vedic religion and performed Vedic sacrifices, they tended to show greater respect and favour towards Buddhism. So, the popularity of Buddhism can be witnessed through the worship of Buddhist images prevalent during this period. The inscriptions of Satakarni,

Krishna<sup>6</sup>, Gautamiputra Satakarni<sup>7</sup>, and Vasisthiputra Pulumavi<sup>8</sup> found at Nasik caves and the inscriptions of Vasisthiputra Pulumavi<sup>9</sup> and Gautamiputra Yagnasri<sup>10</sup> on the caves of Karla, Amaravati<sup>11</sup> and Kanheri record the royal grants to the *Buddhist Sanghas*. The chief patrons of Buddhism were ladies, many of them from the royal harem, the classes of merchants and artisans and also the people at large.

The kings of this dynasty performed vedic sacrifices and patronised Brahminical religion. The Naneghat inscription<sup>12</sup> of Naganika and the Nasik inscription of Vasisthiputra Pulumavi describe the vedic sacrifices and the rule of Gautamiputra Satakarni, strictly based on *Dharma Sastras*. The Satavahana metronymics are derived from the vedic *gotras*. Gautamiputra means the son of Gautami or a lady belonging to the *Gautama gotra*<sup>13</sup>. The emphasis shown in the Vedic religion by the Satavahana kings was responsible for the Vedic culture to be initiated in Rayalasima also.

The idol worship in Buddhism initiated by the Satavahana kings inspired the people of the Vedic religion to worship the Vedic gods in the form of idols. Idol worship was encouraged among the Hindus also. Influenced by the Buddhistic constructions, the Hindus also constructed shrines for the Vedic gods on a large scale. The famous Siva linga at Gudimallam, belonging to the first century BC suggests that the idol worship of Lord Siva was propagated during this period. The recent discovery of Virapuram (Kurnool district) brought to light a large number of Saiva shrines which were built by the Satavahana kings. As in other places of the Andhra country, in Rayalasima region also temple building activity was undertaken. The Prakrit literature of this period propagated idol worship of the Vedic gods. *Gathasaptasati* compiled by Hala mentions a number of episodes related to Lord Siva and Lord Vishnu. Personal names especially in the royal family appeared with Saiva prefixes. Names of frequent occurrences were Siva, Sivaskanda, Sivadatta etc. The appearance of bull<sup>14</sup> on Satavahana coins also indicates the Saiva leanings of the kings. In her Nasik cave inscription Gautamiputra Balasri compared her son Satakarni with Rama, Bhagiratha and Ambarisha. The wife of Satakarni I worshipped Vasudeva, Krsna and Samkarsana<sup>15</sup>. The first Satavahana king probably Simuka is said to have built Jain temples and *Chaityas*. These points show as to how different religious beliefs co-existed in the Satavahana dominion. The Rayalasima formed an *ahara*, as scholars opine according to the *Myakadoni* inscription of Pulumavi. The religious sentiments prevalent in other parts of the Satavahana kingdom also echoed in Rayalasima.

## 5. The Early Pallavas (290 - 510 A.D.)

At the end of the 2nd century A.D. and in the beginning of the 3rd century A.D., the Satavahana empire began to decline and the feudatory chiefs became independent. A number of independent principalities arose in their respective localities. The Rayalasima area, including Cuddapah, Kurnool and Chittoor except Anantapur fell into the hands of the Pallavas<sup>16</sup>. Though, no record of the early Pallavas are found here, *Munda-rastra* and *Hiranya-rastra* are mentioned in the inscriptions of Vishnugopa and his son Simhavarman II, who ruled over the coastal region comprising the present Nellore and Guntur districts in the 5th century A.D. *Allahabad pillar* inscription mentions that Samudragupta, the emperor of Magadha, invaded Kanchi and disturbed Vishnugopa. Samudragupta's army while advancing to Kanchi, must have passed through Cuddapah district and created a stir.

## 6. The Nalas

A family of local chiefs known as Nalas was ruling over the territory of Nalavadi around the early 6th century A.D., which lay in the direction of Bellary and Kurnool. Very little is known about the events connected with their rule in this district<sup>17</sup>.

## 7. The Chalukyas of Badami (C.5th - 8th Cent. A.D.)

The association of the *Chilikas* with the Hiranyaks is of special interest. There can be no doubt that *Chilika* is identical with Chalukya inscriptions as the family name of the rulers of that dynasty. Now, according to the tradition preserved in the charters of the Eastern Chalukya kings of Vengi, Vishnuvardhana, the progenitor of the Chalukya race, was born at Mudivemu, the present Peddamudiya in the Jammalamadugu taluk, a place within the boundaries of the *Hiranya-rastra*. The reference in the Ikshvaku inscription to the *Chaliki* in close association with *Hiranya-rastra* with the truth of the legend mentioned above. Peddamudiya six kms. away from Ahobilam may be regarded as the cradle of the Chalukyan family, which played an important part in the history of the Deccan of the later ages<sup>18</sup>. Ikshvakus had matrimonial alliances with the *Hiranyakas*. Thus, this area comprising the eastern taluks of Cuddapah district was closely associated with the Ikshvaku kingdom.

The Western Chalukya ruler of Badami, Kirtivarman I (566/7 - 597/8 A.D.), defeated the Nalas and occupied their territory. Pulakesin II (609/10 - 642 A.D.) who entered into conflict with the Pallavas suffered a series of reverses and lost this territory to the Pallava king Narasimhavarman I. Pulakesin's death in one of the battles in A.D. 642 gave rise to a war of succession among his sons, Chandraditya, Adityavarman, Vikramaditya I and Jayasimhavarman, who like the other feudatories, sought their safety by converting the territories under them into independent kingdoms. A copperplate grant in Kurnool refers to the self-assumed Adityavarman's titles and states that he had conquered a vast empire. This district appears to have been in the hands of the Pallavas till A.D. 654 when the war of succession ended with the accession of Vikramaditya I. Kurnool district again came under the Chalukyas and remained with them till they were overthrown by the Rashtrakutas<sup>19</sup>.

## 8. The Greater Pallavas (575 - 893 A.D.)

The Rayalasima region passed into the hands of the greater Pallavas between 630 A.D. and 800 A.D., which can be attested to, from a number of inscriptions found in Chittoor district. The greater Pallavas obtained the Rayalasima region from the early Chalukyas after the defeat of Pulakesin II in 642 A.D., by the Pallava king Narasimhavarman I (630 A.D. - 680 A.D.)<sup>20</sup>. The political battles fought between these two kings took place on the battle-fields of *Manimangalam*, *Pariyala* and *Surmara* in Cuddapah and Kurnool districts. Pulakesin II was killed in these battles and the Pallavas occupied more Chalukyan dominated areas in Rayalasima.

The Pallavas took up several temple-building activities and donated lands and villages for their development. The Parasurameswara temple at Gudimallam (Chittoor district) was constructed by the Pallavas. According to an epigraph dated 801 A.D., this temple was built in the middle of the 8th century A.D.<sup>21</sup> There are inscriptions to attest to the fact that the Pallavas and the Banas donated liberally to this temple.

## 9. The Cholas (C.9th - 13th Cent. A.D.)

The Chola king Karikala, the predecessor of Cholas in Tamil and Telugu regions had frequent wars with Trilochana Pallavas in the fifth century A.D., which resulted in the overthrow of the Pallavas not only from their home territory *Tondamandalam* but also from the Telugu region including *Paka-nadu*, a part of Cuddapah and Nellore regions. A part of Cuddapah district was under the rule of a local dynasty of Chola chiefs during the period of the Pallava-Chalukya wars. The Cholas of Tamil country, deported from their home land during a period of their weakness, were in quest of fortune. The Cholas of *Renadu* was such a branch<sup>22</sup>.

## 10. The Renati Cholas (C. 6th - 10th Cent. A.D.)

*Renadu* is the name of the part of the Andhra country comprising broadly the present taluks of Pulivendala, Kamalapuram and Jammalamadugu of the Cuddapah district and some stretches in the Kurnool district. It is stated in the inscriptions of *Renadu-eduvelu* (*Renadu-7000*) implying that this territory consisted of 7000 villages or *renadu* units in the ancient days<sup>23</sup>. It is also called *Maharajavadi* or *marjavadi*. A branch of Chola chiefs ruled this region from the sixth to the tenth Century A.D., and hence, they were called the *Renati Cholas* by the historians. Four copper plates grant and nearly fifty stone inscriptions<sup>24</sup> are available of this dynasty.

The *Renati Chola* king Pormukharma Punyakumara conquered the *Hiranya-rastra*, a subdivision of the Pallava kingdom of Kanchi in the 7th century A.D. He styled himself the lord of *Hiranya-rasra* in his Dommara Nandyala copper plate inscription<sup>25</sup>. During his reign the famous Buddhist traveller Hieun-Tsang of China passed through *Renadu* and his reference to the kingdom of *culiya* is identified with this dynasty. These Cholas had lost their control over *Renadu* somewhere about the 10th century A.D. An undated inscription at *Veligallu* (Chittoor district) refers to a Vaidumba chief, Ganda Trinetra as ruling over *Renadu-7000* country<sup>26</sup>. The dated inscriptions of Vaidumbas appear in places like Upparapalli in Proddatur taluk and Animela in Kamalapuram taluk since the last quarter of the 10th century A.D.

Another branch of Telugu Cholas of Bodinenipalli is named after the village in Giddalur taluk of Kurnool district. They became feudatories of the early Chalukyas of Badami in the 7th century A.D. Another branch of Telugu Cholas of Nellore also ruled the south-eastern part of Cuddapah district in 1160 A.D., and later they were brought under the control of the Kayastha chiefs in the beginning of the 14th century A.D.<sup>27</sup> Another branch called Nidugal Cholas, Oraiyur Cholas established their rule over the territories Nidugal and Hemavati (Anantapur district) in the middle of the 11th century A.D.

The *Renati Cholas* were very busy warring with the Vaidumbas and Rastrakutas and did not carry on any temple-building activities. Their inscriptions record their donations largely to the Vedic Brahmins and temples which existed already by that time.

## 11. The Vaidumbas (C. 11th - 11th Cent. A.D.)

Consequent on the fall of the Cholas of *Renadu*, the region was seized by the Vaidumbas, another line of Telugu-speaking chiefs. Their original home was in Chittoor district, where their ancient capital *Vaidumbavolu* is situated. After the conquest of *Renadu* from the early Cholas, they changed their capital to *Chippili* in Madanapalli taluk and subsequently to *Pottapui* in the Rajampet taluk. Although they claim to have been ruling *Renadu-7000*, this is in the present Pulivendala, Kamalapuram, Jammalamadugu taluks and parts of Kurnool district, their authority extended in the taluks of Madanapalli, Vayalpadu, Rayachoty, Rajampet and parts of Kolar district. Only a few kings of the later generations of the family seem to have ruled over the taluks of Kamalapuram, Jammalamadugu and Cuddapah also, besides the taluks mentioned above.

The rule of Vaidumbas was extended into the Telangana region also during the 11th and 12th centuries A.D. They waged regular battles with the *Pastrabhis* and the Nolambas. Though they were continuously ruling the same parts of Rayalasima off and on, they had to depend upon give-and-take policy with the *Pastrabhis* and Nolambas. They seemed to be vassals of the western Chalukyas of Kalyani. As the western Chalukyas were on the verge of their extinction, the Vaidumbas could consolidate their power in Cuddapah district.<sup>28</sup> The Vaidumba chief *Maharaja* is mentioned in the inscriptions at Alampur in Mahaboobnagar district dated A.D. 1078 and 1079 as the ruler of *Aize-300* under the control of Vikramaditya VI<sup>29</sup>. The chief is said to be the

lml of Kalukada. *Rayadevamaharaja*, also known as *Rakkasa Ganga*, was a powerful king of Vidumbas. He conquered some territory belonging to the Telugu Cholas of Nellore in or about 247 A.D., and occupied a part of it extending as far as least as Jyoti in Siddavatham taluk.

Another Vaidumba chief, Somideva ruled for nearly thirty five years. In some of the inscriptions at *Chintalapattur* near Pushpagiri in Cuddapah taluk dated 1268 A.D., he figures as a joint ruler with another chief called Murarikesavadeva Maharaja and both are styled as the lords of Kalukada<sup>30</sup>. According to *Yallareddipalli* inscription (Kamalapuram taluk), Somidevi was ruling in 1267 A.D., over *Muliki-300*, *Honnnavati-90* and *Pemdekallu-800* from Vallurupattana, his capital in Cuddapah taluk. Another inscription found at Gundluru in Rajampet taluk dated 1284 A.D., shows that Somideva brought subsequently under his control Pottapinadu also. He was defeated by Kayastha prince Ambadeva. Ambadeva refers to his victory over the Vaidumba chiefs in his Tripurantakam inscription dated 1290 A.D.<sup>31</sup> According to an inscription of 1287 A.D., found at Attirala in Rajampet taluk, Ambadeva was ruling from his capital *Valluru* pattana over Gandikota, *Muliki-nadu*, *Renadu*, *Pendakallu*, *Eruva*, *Sakali* and *Pottapi*<sup>32</sup>. This shows that the *Kayasthas* gained over the Vaidumbas and the Vaidumbas lost their control over Rayalasima.

## 12. The Kalyani Chalukyas (973 - 1198 A.D.)

The Chalukyas of Kalyani started their rule in the Rayalasima area in 973 A.D., which reached its zenith under Vikramaditya VI. There are many epigraphs to confirm their rule in this region. According to an inscription dated 1124 A.D.<sup>33</sup>, Vikramaditya is referred to have been associated with *Peddamudiyam*. This inscription also mentions his subordinates Ayatanachola Maharaja and Chidona Chola Maharaja, who both belonged to the Cholas of *Renadu*. This clearly shows that the Cholas of *Renadu* lost their power.

After Vikramaditya VI, his son Someswara III (1126 A.D.) became the king. His subordinate Mallideva issued two epigraphs dated 1139 A.D., found at *Pushpagiri*, which mention that Someswara III ruled Valluru (Cuddapah district). Some inscriptions from Valluru and Kurnool region mention the rule of Someswara III. An inscription found at *Kolimigundla* (Kurnool district) dated 1134 A.D., refers to their subordinate chief Vankanachola Maharaja, ruling *Renadu*, *Pendekallu* and *Kannenadu*. All the above inscriptions clearly show that the north-eastern parts of Kurnool district, including Cuddapah were under the rule of Someswara III. According to an inscription found at *Devagudi* (Jammalamadugu taluk), Someswara's son Jagadekamalla II (1138- 1155 A.D.) ruled some parts of Cuddapah. The inscription of Tailapa II dated 992 A.D., found at Kogili<sup>34</sup> (Bellary taluk) records his rule of *Redda* identified as Roddam in Penukonda taluk (Anantapur district). Some more inscriptions of this king found at Bellary record that Tailapa II seized a portion of *Nolambavadi*, which remained under his control till 997 A.D.

The inscriptions found in the Anantapur region refer to the reign of Vikramaditya II (1076-1126 A.D.) and his subordinates. His son Someswara III recaptured *Gangavadi*, *Nolambavadi* and *Banavasi* and established his rule over these parts. An inscription found at *Astasivaram*<sup>35</sup> (Madakasira taluk) refers to Someswara III who destroyed the *Kalachurya*. It is also mentioned that during his reign, *Hoyasala* invaded his empire and defeated the last king named Someswara IV (1184-1200 A.D.) and captured his capital Kalyani.

## 13. The Rastrakutas (753 A.D. - 974 A.D.)

The *Rastrakuta* king, Dantidurga overpowered the early Chalukya king, Kirtivarma II and became master of Karnataka and conquered the rulers of Kanchi, Telugu Cholas of Srisailem. Thus

Srisailem region came under the control of the Rastrakutas in the 8th century A.D., and continued to be a part of their kingdom till the 10th century A.D. The expansion of Rastrakuta empire into the Cuddapah district and further south is attested to by a number of inscriptions. Indra III probably the first Rastrakuta monarch to rule directly over the Cuddapah region. The Chittoor and Cuddapah districts were ruled by the Rastrakuta king, Krishna III, who defeated the Chola king Parantaka I (907 - 955 A.D.)<sup>36</sup>. Krishna III visited temples in his kingdom and made some liberal grants. An inscription found at Pushpagiri records his gift of land to temples at Pushpagiri, while returning from a pilgrimage to Jyoti (Siddavaram taluk). Another inscription of the time of Krishna III found at Rameswaram (Cuddapah) temple<sup>37</sup>. It describes the genealogy of Rastrakuta kings i.e., Dantidurga, Krishna, Prabhutavarsha, Dhruva, Jagattunga and Krishna.

The Rastrakuta power eclipsed after Krishna III. The Kalyani Chalukyas became more powerful and king Tailapa II put pressure on Rastrakutas in 973 A.D., and overthrew them. Though the Rastrakutas were replaced by the Chalukyas of Kalyani, the region of Rayalasima continued to be under the rule of the Cholas for some years.

#### 14. The Kakatiyas (1000 - 1323 A.D.)

As the successors of the Cholas, the Velanadu Cholas established their authority in this region. During their reign, the Kakatiya king Rudradeva (1158 A.D.- 1198 A.D.) invaded the territories belonging to the Velanadu Cholas and conquered Srisailem region in the South. By 1162 A.D, Srisailem became the southern boundary of the Kakatiya kingdom<sup>38</sup>. Then onwards, Srisailem formed a part of the Kakatiya empire upto 1323 A.D. A number of inscriptions are found in Tripurantakam in the reign period of Rudradeva (1199-1261 A.D.). Ganapatideva, the first ruler of the Kakatiya dynasty, who conquered the Cuddapah region and ruled over it. He conquered the region with the help of the Telugu Cholas of Nellore. He defeated the Vaidumba ruler who occupied Pottapinadu for the benefit of Manumasiddi<sup>39</sup>. This was the first time that Ganapatideva had contact with Cuddapah district. The earliest epigraph of the Kakatiyas dated 1275 A.D., found at Gangavaram (Kamalapuram taluk) refers to Ganapatideva<sup>40</sup>. He appointed the Kayastha chief Gangayasahini as the Governor of this region. From this incident onwards, Cuddapah region became part of the Kakatiya empire upto 1323 A.D. The Gangavaram inscription of Ganapatideva also registers the gift made by the Chief Gangayasahini and his wife Kamalabai to the Pushpagiri temple. There are inscriptions found in various places in this district belonging to the period of his grandson Prataparudra. An inscription of Kayastha Chief Tripurari II (1304 A.D.) records that the chief ruled from Valluru in *Mulikinadu*, a sub-division of Cuddapah region. Another inscription dated 1308 A.D. found in Kurnool<sup>41</sup> records that Tripurari II controlled almost all the portions of Cuddapah region.

The Kakatiya Kings and their subordinates ruled over Rayalasima. They undertook temple building and other welfare activities on a large scale and also made religious charities towards temple development in this region. An inscription dated 1185 A.D., belonging to the king Rudra, found at Tripurantakam<sup>42</sup> informs that he donated a village *Revuru* for Tripurantakeswara of *Sripavata* (identified as Tripurantakam). The king also paid a visit to Srisailem and later on blessed with son. By the grace of Mallikarjuna of Srisailem (as claimed by Rudra) the prince blessed by Mallikarjuna became an illustrious king called Ganapatideva<sup>43</sup>. Ganapatideva was a powerful king. He was equally spiritual-minded and was responsible for many religious establishments in his kingdom. The subordinate chiefs of Kakatiyas also equally participated in contributing for the development of temples in this period.

During the periods of Rudramadevi (1262-1289 A.D.) and Prataparudra (1289-1323 A.D.), the religious activities were carried on with enthusiasm. The ministers, royal officers religious pre-



ceptors equally patronised the Saiva religion. The ladies of the royal family also contributed to the development of temples. Potamba, wife of Somabhhupala caused the erection of a Dhvaja of the Tripurantakam temple<sup>44</sup>. A record from Srikalahasti<sup>45</sup>, engraved on a stone in front of Manikanteswara temple, registers the creation of an endowment for the sake of offerings to Srikalahastiswara by Samantabhoja. This man is described to be a minister of Ganapatideva, according to one inscription found at Kanchipuram<sup>46</sup>.

#### 15. The Kayasthas (1239 - 1304 A.D.)

The *Kayasthas* seem to have been associated with the rule of Rayalasima from the 13th century A.D., according to their inscriptions. They described themselves as *Kshatriyas*. Though they were feudatories under the Kakatiyas, they proclaimed independence and then under favourable conditions. Their inscriptions are available in Cuddapah and Kurnool districts. The inscriptions attest the fact that they ruled the region between *Panagallu* and *Marjavadi*<sup>47</sup>.

#### 16. The Yadavas (C 12th - 13th Cent. A.D.)

The Western portion of Kurnool region was under the control of the Yadavas in the last quarter of the 12th century A.D., and the eastern portion fell into the hands of the Kakatiyas. The Yadava kings occupied portions in Cuddapah and Anantapur districts as attested to by some inscriptions. The reign of Singana, a Yadava ruler (1210-1246 A.D.), is attested to by two inscriptions found at *Peddakottaliki* and *Devarabatlal* in Adoni taluk<sup>48</sup>. Two inscriptions of Hoyasala III, dated 1178 A.D., and 1205 A.D., found at Parigi (Hindupur taluk) and *Hemavati* (Madakasira taluk) record a conflict between the Yadavas and Hoyasalas. The position of Yadavas in the Cuddapah district was disturbed by the Kayasthas.

#### 17. The Vijayanagara Kings (1336 - 1674 A.D.)

After the Kakatiyas, the Srisailem region in Kurnool district was occupied by Prolayavema Reddy, the founder of the Reddi kingdom. It is included in *Puginadu*, which formed the nucleus of his kingdom. But in 1339 A.D., the Vijayanagara king Harihara I conquered and occupied Srisailem. After the death of Harihara I, the Velama Chief Lingamanayaka occupied this region and held it for some time. Between 1363 A.D. and 1364 A.D., Bukka I, the successor of Harihara I, re-conquered this area and entrusted it to his chief who belonged to the *Recherla* family. After the downfall of the Reddi kingdom in 1422 A.D., Srisailem region became a permanent part of the Vijayanagara empire. The Chittoor region was administered by Kampana II, a Viceroy under his uncle Harihara I and his father Bukka I<sup>49</sup>. During the reign of Kampana II, his General Mangideva Maharaja had the central shrine of the *Koyil-Alvar* gilded and got the golden pinnacle placed on Tirumala temple. This is recorded in an inscription found at Tirumala<sup>50</sup> dated 1359 A.D. When Kampana II ruled over Chittoor district, Sayanna Odayar, brother of Harihara I was appointed as the Viceroy of the Udayagiri region. Harihara I also appointed his brother Bukka I and put him in charge of the Gooty fortress. Bukka I then conquered the Penukonda fortress from the subordinates of Viraballala III of Hoyasala dynasty and changed his headquarters from Gooty to Penukonda<sup>51</sup>. From all these evidences, it is known that the kings of Vijayanagara dynasty ruled portions of Rayalasima from 1339 A.D.

There are a number of inscriptions found in Rayalasima region that attest their rule. Some inscriptions of those rulers dated between 1408 A.D. and 1417 A.D. are found at Gaurivaripalli (Hindupur taluk), Gulapalayamu (Gooty taluk), Dharmavaram, Kadiri, Lepakshi and other places in Anantapur district<sup>52</sup>. During the reign of Devaraya I, the Western part of Udayagiri in Cuddapah region was ruled by Ahobala of Apartimalla family. This Chief ruled the *Udayagiri rajya* in the vicinity of Pushpagiri.

This is confirmed by an inscription dated 1420 A.D., found ■ *Goturas* near Pushpagiri<sup>53</sup>. This inscription registers the gift of land to the temple of Bhairaveswara ■ this place for the spiritual benefit of his parents. During the period of Saluva Narasimha, an inscription issued by ■ officer, Annamarasayya dated 1477 A.D., found ■ *Attirala*, records the restoration of the temple lands ■ *Poli* for the temples of Parasurameswara and Bhairava by that officer, who was on a pilgrimage ■ *Siddhavatam* and *Attirala*.

A large number of inscriptions, issued by Krishnadevaraya of Vijayanagara are found in Anantapur and Kurnool districts. Achyutaraya, the next successor of Krishnadevaraya also issued many inscriptions which are found in this district. The next ruler, Sadasivaraya also issued inscriptions in this district. Numerous inscriptions of Achyuta and Sadasiva found in Cuddapah bear ample testimony to the fact that the authority of Vijayanagar over this area continued unabated during their reigns.

During the reign of Sadasiva, the *de facto* ruler of the empire ■ his brother-in-law Ramaraja of the Aravidu family. He ■ assisted by his brother Tirumala. On the fateful field of *Rakshasa-Tangadi* in January 1565 A.D., a fierce battle took place between the combined forces of the Muslims and the Vijayanagara forces. In this battle Ramaraja was killed and the Hindu army was disturbed very badly. These fateful events brought about the end of Vijayanagara empire.

Even after this tragedy of *Rakshasa-Tangadi*, the Vijayanagara power, however, lingered on for nearly a century more. Tirumala, the brother of Ramaraja, succeeded in preserving his dynasty, the bulk of his empire, ■ doubt, included the whole of Cuddapah. The capital was shifted from Vijayanagara to Penugonda in the Anantapur district, though the empire still retained its old ■.

Tirumala was succeeded by his son Sriranga I. According to an inscription ■ *Ponnatotala* (Jammalamadugu taluk) dated 1574 A.D., Sriranga was ruling Penugonda. This is the first known inscription of this king. Sriranga I was succeeded by his brother Venkatapatideva Maharaya. According to 'Vijayanagara Samrajyam' (described in Mackenzie manuscripts), Venkatapatideva's coronation was celebrated in the year 1585 A.D. One of his inscriptions dated 1589 A.D. is found at *Kokatam* (Kamalapuram taluk)<sup>54</sup>.

From the account given by a historian, we learn that during the time of Venkatapatideva Maharaya, the forces of Golkonda led by Amir-ul-mulk, the Minister of Quly Qutb Shah, succeeded in occupying the whole of Kurnool, portions of Cuddapah and Anantapur districts<sup>55</sup>. This ■ only ■ temporary ■ for the Muslims. For, in a short time, Venkatapati mustered all his available forces, made an all-out attack on the enemy and succeeded in liberating all the territories mentioned above from the Muslims. It is said that the Muslim garrisons ■ chased across the Krishna and Sultan Quly was forced to recognise that river ■ the boundary between his kingdom and the dominions of the emperor of Vijayanagara<sup>56</sup>.

Close ■ the heels of this external menace, Venkata II seems to have been confronted with ■ serious internal revolt of the nobles in the Rayalasima ■. Nandyala Krishnamaraju of *Gandikotasima* joined by Kondaraju Tipparaju of Pottapi and Siddhavatam simas, raised the banner of revolt against Venkata II. But the emperor with the help of some of his faithful nobles ■ Yallamaraja, Devappanayaka and Pemmasani Timmana promptly put down the rebellion. *Gandikota* ■ now handed over to the house of Pemmasani Timmana and *Siddhavatam sima* ■ Yellamaraja on behalf of Venkata ■ in ■ battle of Utukuru ■ described in an inscription ■ 1527 A.D.<sup>57</sup>

After the death of Venkata II in 1614 A.D. his nephew, Sriranga II succeeded him. The weak and incompetent rule of this king resulted in several palace intrigues which ended up in his death and also of many members of his family. The next ruler was Ramadeva, son of Sriranga II. Ramadeva

■ fortunate in having the help and able guidance of Yachamanayaka, son of Velugoti Kasturiranga. An inscription at *Papayapalli* (Jammalamadugu taluk) dated 1623 A.D. mentions Ramadeva ■ the overlord of that ■.

It was only in the time of Sriranga III, who ruled from 1642 to 1681 A.D., that the whole of Cuddapah region passed under the Muslim rule. Mirjumla, the Minister of Sultan of Golkonda, laid siege to the fort of *Udayagiri* about 1645 A.D., and captured it without much trouble due to the traitorous behaviour of Chinnana who ■ sent against him by Sriranga. Later, the victorious Mirjumla attacked the principality of Chittiveli, Porumamilla and Kamalapuram Matlikumara, Ananta, the ruler of the above territories as feudatory of Sriranga could not prevent the loss of territory ■ he could ■ repel these aggressions. He had to purchase peace by offering the aggressor ■ large sum of money. Thus came about the end of Vijayanagara rule in this region.

During the period of the Vijayanagara kings, they undertook building of new temples and patronised the temples which already existed in their empire. Krishnadevaraya's donations in cash and kind to many temples in Rayalasima ■ attested to in his inscriptions. There are many inscriptions recording his donations to Tirumala temple and Srikalahastiswara temple. He visited the Pushpagiri temple and came to know that the priests of the temple were *tambula* by caste and not Brahmins<sup>18</sup>. He later ■ replaced the *tambulas* with Brahmins and granted them two *Agraharas*, Goturu and Pushpagiri. An inscription of Krishnadevaraya, dated 1510 A.D., registers the gift of eight hundred *panam* (money) for the purchase of land to create an endowment for making offerings of food, flower-garlands and for keeping lamps for the God, one during day and another during night in the temple of Srikalahastiswara. Not only Krishnadevaraya, but also other Vijayanagara kings, their royal officers and royal ladies contributed much for the development of temples.

## 18. Other Chiefs

In the Kurnool region many local families such as ■ Velugodu, Nandyal, Owk, Kundurpi and Kandanolu chiefs ruled over different portions. They, as their overlords did, contributed to the development of their respective areas and donated liberally to temples.

### A. The Velugodu Chiefs:

During the hegemony of the Vijayanagar rulers, a few local families such as the chiefs of Velugodu, Nandyal, Owk and Kandanolu ruled over portions of Kurnool district.

The first member of the Velugodu family called after Velugodu, ■ village in Atmakur, an independent sub-taluk, ■ Rayappa (also called Peda Raya.). He was a subordinate of the Gajapatis of Orissa and Kapilesvara Gajapati conferred on him the title of 'King of Velugodu'. He is said to have lost his life in ■ battle fought with an enemy, whose ■ is not ascertainable, in the neighbourhood of Mahanandi in this district. Another member of the family Gani Timma, called after his capital *Gani* (Nandyal), ■ ■ subordinate of the Vijayanagar rulers, Krishnadevaraya and Achyutadevaraya. He marched against Santa Linga, the head of the *Bhikshavritti Math* at Srisailem. He is ■ religious fanatic, who believed in the persecution of the *Svetambara* Jains. At the instance of Krishnadevaraya, Gani Timma fought and defeated him. He helped Achyutadevaraya in repulsing the Qutb Shahi and the Gajapati attacks against the Vijayanagar empire. He received the title of 'the lord of the Manne chiefs' from Achyutadevaraya in appreciation of his services. In A.D. 1544, Timma, who came into conflict with Havadi Avubalaraja, the head of ■ section of the Nandyala branch of the Aravidu family, was killed in a battle. The other important members of the family were (1) Yara Timma, son of Gani Timma, (2) Kasturi Ranga, (3) Chenna, (4) Yacha or Yachama, son of Kasturi Ranga, (5) Kumara Yachama, son of Yacha, and (6) Singa. They supported their sovereigns loyally and took an

active part in putting down the internal rebellions and repulsing the attacks of the Qutb Shahi Sultans. Their estates were, however, subsequently conquered by the Qutb Shahi forces and they were compelled to become the subordinates of the Qutb Shahis.<sup>59</sup>

### B. The Nandyala Chiefs

The Nandela or Nandyala family, a branch of the Aravidu dynasty, the fourth in the line of rule over the Vijayanagar empire, was named after Nandyala, its hereditary estate. Several members of this family figure in the governors of a number of estates. During the reign of Sadasiva, the Nandyala chief Mahamandalesvara Aubhalesvara was governing the *Koilkuntla-sima*, while Mahamandalesvara Nandyala Timmayadeva Maharaja was holding the *Gandikota-sima*. This was probably due to the favours conferred on them by the ruling Aravidu chiefs Aliya Ramaraja and Tirumala to whom they were related. The epigraphs of these chiefs are found scattered over a number of places in Kurnool district.

These chiefs, who were loyal to the rulers of the main line till the reign of Sriranga I, turned hostile to Venkata II and instigated the local nobles to rise in revolt. In A.D. 1597-98, Nandela Krishnamaraja refused to pay the usual tribute to Venkata II and asserted his independence. He was joined by Kondaraju Trupatiraju, the ruler of Pottapi and Siddhavatam or Sidhout (both in Cuddapah) and Gopalaraju, the chief of Kandanolu. He was defeated by Venkata II, and his estates were confiscated and divided between Hande Devappa Nayaka and Pemmani Timma Nayaka. Krishnamaraja was confined at Chandragiri (Chittoor) till his death and little is known about the subsequent history of the family.<sup>60</sup>

### C. The Kandanolu Chiefs

The chiefs of *Avukusima* known after *Owk* in Koilkuntla taluk and the chiefs of *Kandanolu* called after *Kurnool* were the next in importance. Tirumala or Timma was the progenitor of the *Owk* family. He rose to prominence under Vira Narasimha and Krishnadevaraya. His third son Mahamandalesvara Chinna Timmadeva appears to be the first chief to hold the *Avukusima* as 'nayankara'. Little is known about the subsequent history of the family.

The chiefs of Kandanolu and *Gani simas* are mentioned in two epigraphs dated S.1469 (A.D. 1547) in Kurnool taluk. These epigraphs refer to Mahamandalesvara Ramaraja Venkatadri Ayyadeva Maharaja as governing the *simas* of Kandanolu and *Gani*. He was followed by Rangaparajayadeva Maharaja and Gopalaraja in succession. They held sway over *Kandanolu* and *Gani* but remitted a number of taxes to several *agrarahas* in them. Gopalaraja joined the rebellion of Nandyala Krishnamaraja against Venkata II. He was defeated and kept in prison at Chandragiri. He was, however, set free after some time and sent back to rule over his fief. His estates were twice attacked by the Bijapur Sultan in A.D. 1619-20 and A.D. 1624. He offered stubborn resistance but failed to protect his estates and fled from the dominion. His estates were occupied by the Bijapur Sultan who appointed Abdul Wahab, a general, as the governor of Kurnool.<sup>61</sup>

### D. Matlis

Historical knowledge of this region will not be complete unless we study the contribution of Matlis to the socio-cultural growth of the place.

In the decades following the battle of *Rakshasa-Tangadi*, the family which endeavoured to continue the traditions of the Vijayanagar empire in varied spheres of activity is that of the Matlis. The association of this family with this district covered almost three centuries. These Matli or Matla chiefs, hailing from the village of Matli on the Mandavi river in Rayachoti taluk, are also known by the

██████████ tanks they constructed, and the temples they built and the number of villages named after them.

Of all the Matli chiefs, Varadaraja's association with this district is significant in view of the influence he wielded during the reign of Sadasiva. The chief who had enhanced the prestige of the Matli family was Ananta █████ a great scholar and was deeply devoted to the Visishtadvaita School of Ramanuja. He was also an able warrior and a good sportsman. He █████ a shining example in respect of practising religious tolerance. He succeeded in suppressing the rebellions which confronted him during the initial stages of his rule. His own brother who was involved in them █████ imprisoned in the Sidhout fort but was later pardoned.

Two epigraphs of S.1550 (A.D.1628) at Alipiri at the foot of the Tirupati hills recount both his deeds of valour and acts of charity. He built a large tank near Chennuru (Cuddapah) and established the villages of Chennamambapura and Chennamambasamudra. He established a dozen free feeding houses and constructed *gopuras* and *mandapas* at various places in the district. He also fought fierce battles at Palagiri, Animala, Chappalle, Vempalle and Gundluru against the pategars. This *lord of Anantarajapura* █████ to have exercised authority over the country lying between the hills of Tirupati (Chittoor) and Ahobila (Kurnool). His gifts to temples at Udayagiri (Nellore), Tiruvallur (Chingleput) and Kalahasti (Chittoor) and his numerous acts of charity including a *Tula-dana*\* have lent an aura of greatness to him. It may be said that the Matli principality reached its zenith during his reign.<sup>62</sup>

On Ananta's death, his adopted son, Kumara Ananta II, succeeded him. He carried █████ the administration of the kingdom with the help of his paternal uncle Ellama. During his time, the Matlis lost a sizeable portion of their territory including Kalitur, Duvvur, Chennuru, Badvel, Porumamilla and Mamalapuram to the Sultan of Golconda. In spite of this setback, Ananta's sway extended fairly over a vast area comprising *Pulugulanadu*, *Pottapinadu* and *Siddhavattamsimas*. When his principality was attacked for a second time by the army of Golconda under Mir Jumla, Ananta succeeded in inflicting a crushing defeat on them. He had, however, to abandon his principality for fear of reprisal by Mir Jumla and retreated to Ikkeri-Basavapuram in Mysore. Mir Jumla then marched with his army to Sidhout, occupied the town and posted a garrison to keep the conquered territory under control.

MAHARASHTRA

ANDHRA PRADESH

ORISSA

TELANGANA

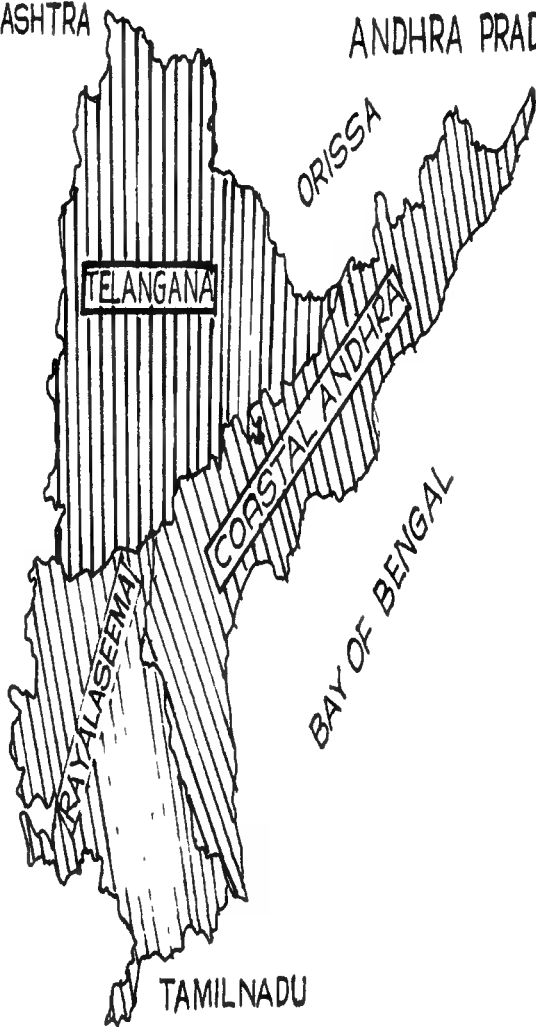
COASTAL ANDHRA

KARNATAKA

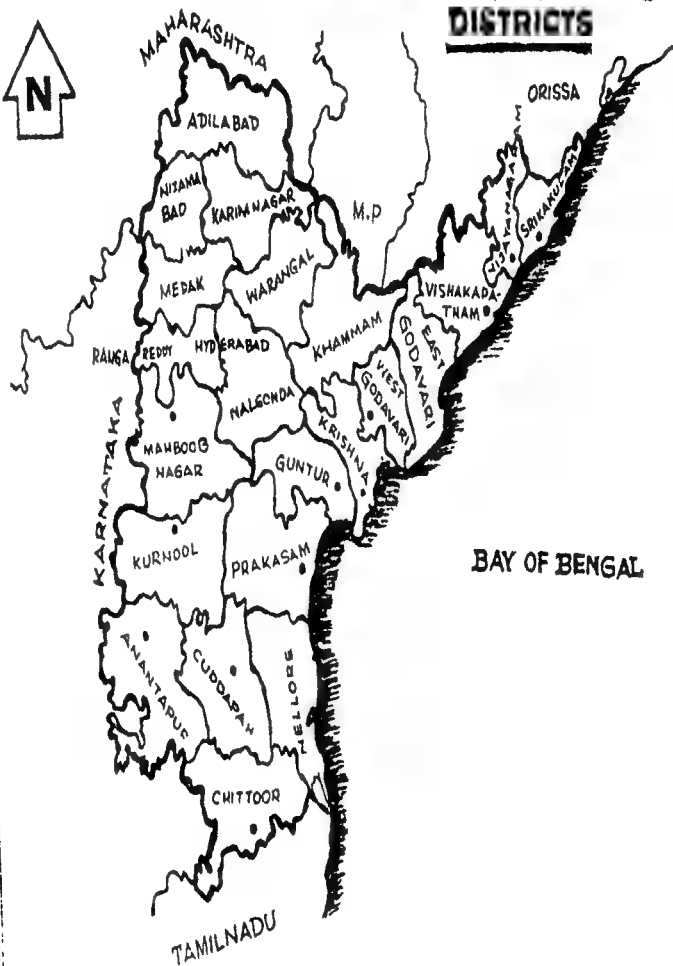
RAYALASEEMA

BAY OF BENGAL

TAMILNADU



# ANDHRA PRADESH DISTRICTS



# RAYALASEEMA REGION

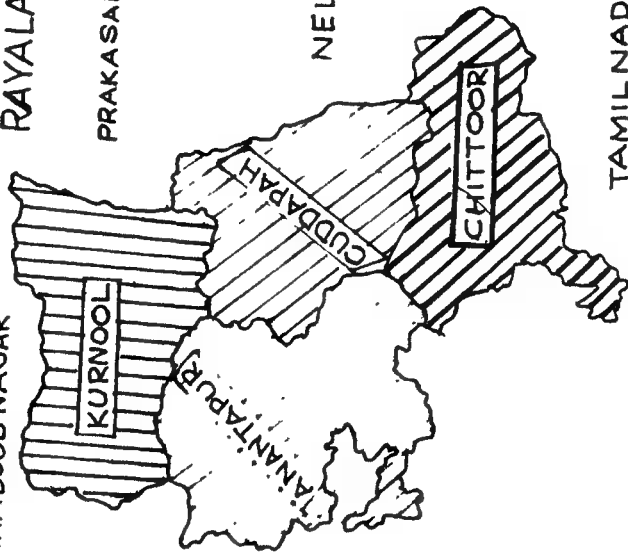
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PRAKASAM

NELLORE

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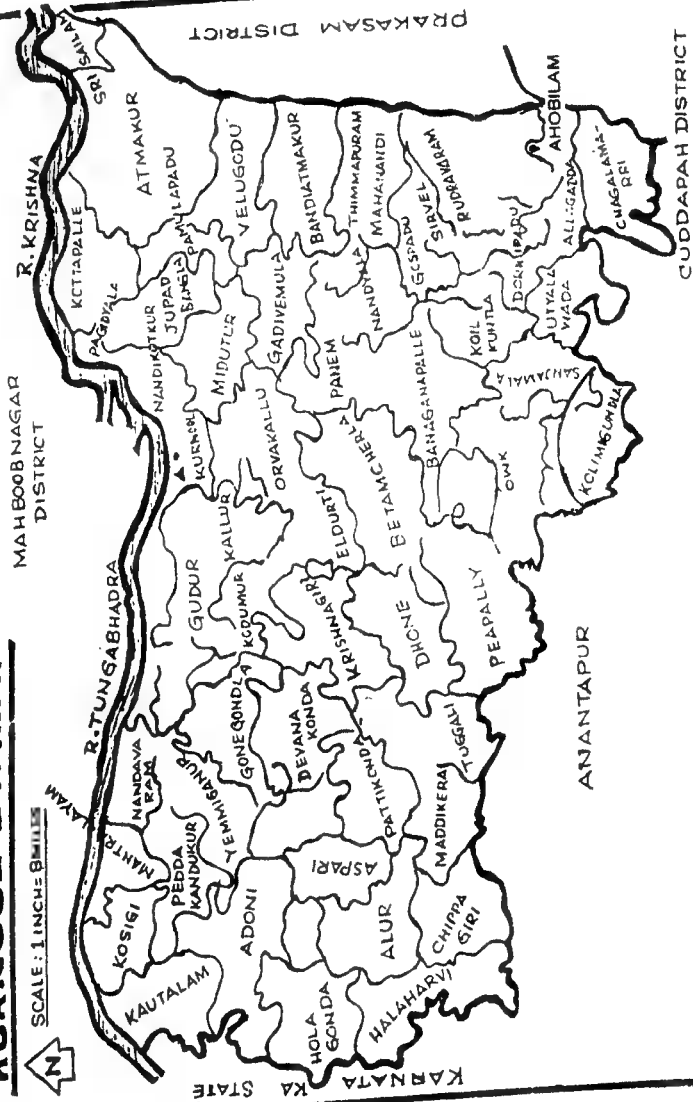
KARNATAKA





# KURNOOL DT. MAP

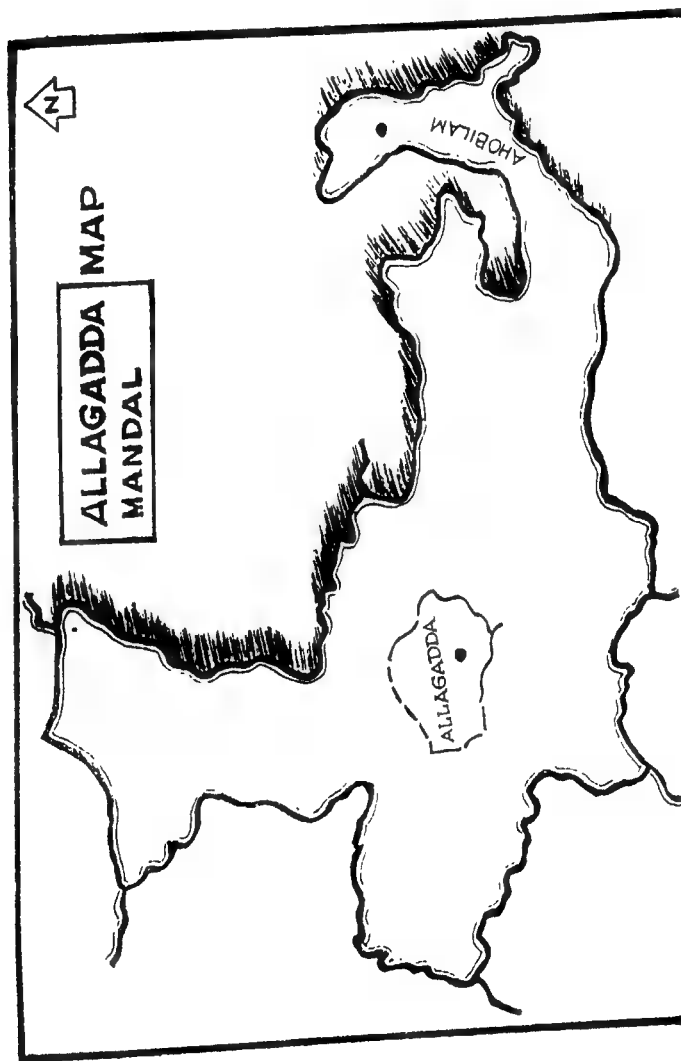
SCALE: 1 INCH = 5 MILES



# ALLAGADDA MANDAL

## MAP







### 1. History of Srivaishnavism

As Ahobilam and the Narasimhaswami shrines are intimately associated with the history and affairs of Srivaishnavism, it would be beneficial to have a short background of Srivaishnavism itself

#### A. Pre-Ramanuja Vaishnavism

Though Srivaishnavism took a definitive shape in the hands of Ramanuja (C 1017-1137 A D ), it has a hoary background. The whole system is based upon complete surrender to god Vishnu, a concept which was already current in various sections of the pre-Ramanuja Vaishnava faith. In fact, this religious movement can be traced ideologically to the rise of the *Bhagavata* system and the *Bhakti* cult. The seeds of the religious and philosophical ideas could be traced to the *Bhagavadgita* itself.

#### B. The Alvars

But it was in Tamilnadu that this form of staunch *Vishnu-bhakti* became a powerful movement due to the efforts of a continuous line of teachers who celebrated the tradition of *Alvars*. 'Alvar', a Tamil term, literally means, 'one who rules', and in this context it is one who rules the world of the faithful. They were the spearhead of the Vaishnava movement in the South India and through their philosophy of complete surrender to God, gave a distinctive shape to a form of Vaishnavism which later became famous as Srivaishnavism. The *Alvars* adopted the local Tamil language for expression of their religious fervour in their intensely devotional songs and appealed to the hearts of the people.

The date of the *Alvars* is much disputed. Traditional accounts put their date at the beginning of the *Kaliyuga*. Prof. S. Vayyapuri Pillai opines that the *Alvar* period falls between the 7th and 9th century A D<sup>1</sup> while according to some others they seem to have flourished between the 2nd and 8th century A D. According to the tradition there were 12 *Alvars* and they are placed in the following line of order:

- 1 Poygai Alvar
- 2 Pudattalvar
- 3 Pey Alvar
- 4 Tirumalisa Alvar

5. Kulasekhara Alvar
6. Tondaradippodi Alvar
7. Tiruppan Alvar
8. Tirumangai Alvar
9. Periya Alvar
10. Andal
11. Nammalvar
12. Madurakavi Alvar<sup>2</sup>

The First three, Poygai, Pudattar and Pey Alvars, born in Kanchipuram, Mamallapuram and Mylapore respectively, form the earliest group. They are placed in a period not later than the 5th or 6th century A.D. Their teachings are very gentle and so simple to understand.

Next comes Tirumalaisai. He takes his name from the village of his birth in Chingleput district. He is said to have been a senior contemporary of the Pallava king Mahendravarman I.<sup>3</sup> Before he accepted Vaishnavism, he practised Jainism, Buddhism and Saivism. It was only later that he ultimately embraced Vaishnavism and became an *Alvar*.

Next in order is Tirumangai, one of the most celebrated among the *Alvars*. He, a chieftain of Alinadu in Tanjore district, took to robbery in order to pay for the renovation of the Ranganatha temple in Srirangam, the most celebrated Srivaishnava temple in the South India. In his hymns, he mentions the siege of Kanchipuram by Vairamegha (Rashtrakuta Dantidurga, 735-756 A.D.) and hence he may be placed in the middle of the 8th century A.D.<sup>4</sup> He has composed a large number of poems, forming the bulk of the collections of the hymns of the *Alvars*. The religious trend of the day is well manifest in his compositions. He attacks Buddhism and Jainism, but shows a friendly attitude to Saivism.<sup>5</sup>

A little later than Tirumangai, about the close of the 8th and the beginning of the 9th century, came Periya *Alvar*, a Brahmin from Srivilliputtur in the Tirunelveli district. He was originally known as Vishnuchitta. He is said to have established the supremacy of Narayana in a religious disputation held in the court of the Pandyan king Srimara Srivallabha (815-862 A.D.). He is the foster father of Goda, another *Alvar*.

Goda or Andal, the only woman to attain the status of *Alvar*, is a magnetic personality among the Srivaishnava devotees, especially known for her intense unsullied love to god Ranganatha of Srirangam. The story goes that she was found as a baby by Peri *Alvar* and he brought her up in his house in which Andal was exposed to the ecstasy of religious devotion displayed by her father. It is said that when Andal was young she used to decorate herself with the garlands prepared by her father to offer to the deity and replace the flowers before sending them to the temple. When once her father came to know about it, he felt that the flowers worn by a mortal were unfit for offering to the god and did not take the flowers to the temple that day. That night the god appeared to him in his dream and chided him for not offering the garlands which were doubly dear to him due to the fact that they had been used by Andal. Thenceforth Peri *Alvar* began to take the same garlands to offer to the God. On this account, it is said, Andal came to be known as *Sudikudutta Nachchiyar* (the lady who gave what she herself decorated with).<sup>6</sup> Andal was intensely devoted to Vishnu and dreamt of her marriage with the God. She describes this experience in a beautiful song which is sung to this day as part of the marriage ceremony in Sri Vaishnava households. Andal is said to have achieved her desire of the mystical union with the God: She entered the *garbhagriha* in the temple of Srirangam and disappeared there. It is said that by this *Peri Alvar* also gained the honour of being considered the father-in-law of god Ranganatha of Srirangam. Andal's songs are appealing to the masses and the elite alike

due to their intensely human but spiritually elevated touch. Her hymns are replete with allusions ■ the stories of Sri Krishna.

Tiruppan Alvar belongs to the ■■■■ period. He is a minstrel of the low caste. As he had not been allowed to enter the temple according to the then existing social practices, he used ■ go on singing songs in praise of the God from outside the precincts of the temple ■ Srirangam. His devotion was ■ great that the Vaishnava belief about the supremacy of devotion over caste or creed is proved in his ■■■■. He is said to have been totally absorbed in God.

Tondaradipodi (the dust of the feet of the devotees) was ■ Brahmin whose real name ■■■ Vipranarayana. A story is told about him that he fell in love with a dancing girl and god Ranganatha himself paved the way to consummate their union. Tondaradipodi was as much intolerant ■ Jainism and Buddhism as he was devoted to Vaishnavism.

In contrast to the various Alvars who came from the different sections of the lower and middle classes of the then society, comes Kulasekhara Alvar, a King of Kerala. He ■■■■ proficient in Sanskrit and Tamil. He was not averse to sing songs in praise of Nataraja at Chidambaram. He abdicated the throne and spent his last days at Srirangam.

Nammalvar, the last of the Alvars, was born in a family of Vellalas (a caste of agriculturists) at Kurugur near Tirunelveli. Because of his association with kurugu, the village became famous later ■ Alvar-Tirunagari. Nammalvar was originally known as *Maran*. He ■■■■ initiated into spirituality in his 35th year at which time he gained the title *Satagopa* (the destroyer of ignorance). Nammalvar's songs are regarded as "embodying the deepest religious experiences and philosophical thought of one of the greatest seers of the world".<sup>7</sup> His songs ■■■ the second largest in number among the compositions included in the compilation of the hymns of the Alvars.

The philosophy of the *Alvars* is deeply indebted to the Vedic and *Puranic* scriptures. The study of these *Alvars* not only makes one understand the spiritual atmosphere of the *Bhakti* school, but also gives a background to the Visistadvaita philosophy.

The *Alvars* are primarily staunch devotees of God and they rarely sought royal patronage. They are leaders of the people, and strove to spread their beliefs among the larger populace rather than conveying them to the kings and elite only.

## 2. The Acharyas

### A. Pre-Ramanuja Acharyas

The Srivaishnava Canon received its definite shape ■ the hands of a succession of *acharyas* from the 9th century onwards.

Nathamuni (9th century A.D.) is reputed ■ be the first among these. He collected the Tamil devotional hymns of the Alvars numbering about 4000 and divided them into four sections of thousand stanzas each. This is famous ■ *Nalayira-prabandam* and is respectfully described by the Srivaishnavas as the *Dravida Veda*. Nathamuni arranged for their regular recitation ■ Srirangam. Thus he popularized the Srivaishnava religion.

*Alavandar* ■■■ next in the succession of Srivaishnava *acharyas* of the period. He is said to have lived during the time of king Raja Raja (985-1012 A.D.). The *Koyil-olugu*, ■ ancient temple manual of Srirangam, says that he was entrusted with the management of the Srirangam temple which he ably conducted for a long time. Alavandar has written four books in Sanskrit viz. *Stotratatna*, *Siddhitraya*, *Agamapramanya* and *Gitarhasamgraha* elucidating the doctrine of Visishtadvaita.

Also, during his time Srivaishnavism began to receive attention and patronage from the Chola kings and generals.

## B. Ramanuja

Ramanuja is the next great *acharya*. He was born at Sriperambudur near Madras in the first quarter of the 11th century. He first studied under Yadavaprakasa of Kanchipuram, who belonged to the school of Samkara. But disagreeing with his teachings, he studied under Tirumala Nambi a disciple of Yamunacharya. In due course of time Ramanuja succeeded Yamunacharya as the pontiff of his math at Srirangam. He engaged himself in systematising the various philosophical ideas, and wrote several works of which the three, viz. *Vedarthasamgraha*, *Gitaabhastya* and *Sribhashya*, are considered to be the most important.

Ramanuja's genius and contribution lie in his systematic presentation of the philosophy of Visishtadvaita (qualified non-dualism) which emphasises that the absolute is endowed with all the auspicious qualities (*Saguna*) in contrast with the simple Advaitic concept of the abstract non-dualistic Absolute (*nirguna*). This Absolute of the Visishtadvaita is no other than Vishnu and the achievement of proximity to Him is the goal of human life i.e. *moksha* and the way to achieve this is through complete surrender (*prapatti*) to Him.

Ramanuja further emphasized that the achievement of *moksha* through surrender is not the prerogative of any particular creed, community or sex but all human souls can achieve this. This concept opened up a new avenue of far reaching social reforms. Ramanuja himself engaged in many acts boldly in going against the then social framework of caste system by throwing open the gates of entry to Srivaishnavism to all, irrespective of the caste in which they were born.

Ramanuja introduced a number of reforms in the temple rituals also to suit the needs of Srivaishnava theological ideas, adding colour and pomp and pageantry making them attractive to the devotees. In short, at a time when the ancient *Bhagavata* doctrine had, through the course of centuries acquired several incoherencies and had lost its lustre, Ramanuja brought a fresh look and appeal to that by his carefully planned religious reformations. In order to propagate his philosophy, he travelled throughout India.

## 3. The Post-Ramanuja Period

### A. Successors of Ramanuja

It is said that Ramanuja prepared 74 sets of *sankham* and *chakram* and 4 copies of *Sri Bhashya*, placed them first at the feet of god Varadaraja of Kanchi and distributed them among a number of disciples. Those who received a set of *sankham* and *chakram* were known as *Simhasanadhipatis* ('Throned Monarchs' of the kingdom of the Good law). This was a way to spread the message of Srivaishnavism far and wide. The main personalities among those who received the *Sri Bhashya* were his close disciples Varada Vishnu Acharya, Pranatartihara, Andan and Pillan.

These disciples and their successors took active interest in further elucidating and disseminating the Srivaishnava ideas. In the course of time, the varied degrees of emphasis laid by the Srivaishnava teachers on the relative importance of *Sri Bhashya* and *Divyaprabandham* led to a schism in Srivaishnavism. Thus in the history of Srivaishnavism two schools rose: the *Sri Bhashya school* with its emphasis on the importance and authority of *Sri Bhashya* for the understanding of the Srivaishnava tenets, and the *Prabandhic school* laying emphasis on the *Divya Prabandhas* for the same purpose. Among the teachers of *Sri Bhashya* school Kurukesa and Engal Alvan of the 12th century and Nadadur Ammal and Atreya Ramanuja of the 13th century were famous. Similarly



*Prabhandic school* was promoted by Bhattar and Nanjiyar of the 12th century and Perivachchan Pillai and Vadakku Tiruvudhi Pillai of the 13th century. By the end of the 13th century the ideological differences between the two schools became pronounced with the exertions of two towering personalities of the day, Vedanta Desika (1268-1369 A.D.) propounding the *Sri Bhashya school* and Pillai Lokacharya (1264-1327 A.D.) propounding the *Prabandhic School*.

Vedanta Desika wrote several works renowned for his analytical acumen, persuasive logic and beauty of diction in his writings which earned for him several titles such as *kavitarkikasimha* and *Sarvatantrasravantra*. He wrote more than hundred works out of which *Satadushini*, *Sankalpa Suryodaya*, *Yadavabhyudaya* and *Yatirajasaptati* are famous. It is during this period that the Srivaishnava leaders were compelled to leave that place. Vedanta Desika moved to Satyamangalam near Coimbatore and visited Melkote.<sup>8</sup>

Pillai Lokacharya is equally famous for his scholarship in logic and prolific writings. Some of his famous works are *Tattivatraya*, *Mumukshupadi* and *Sri Vachana Bhusana*. He often adopted a style in his writings suited to his teachings, in which Sanskrit passages interspersed with Tamil appear (the Manipravala style).

#### 4. The Rise of the Mathas

From the middle of the 15th century A.D. the history of Srivashnavism gains a new turn. From this time onwards a number of distinguished *Acharyapurushas* and Vaishnava leaders begin to figure in as influential personalities on the Socio-political scene. Another important development, was the rise of various religious *mathas* like the *Van-Sathagopa-Jiyar matha*, *Parakala matha*, *Alagiya Manavala-Jiyar matha*, *Vanamamalai matha*, *Yatiraja matha*, etc. A distinctive feature of these *mathas* is that they began to propagate either the *Sri Bhashya school* or the *Prabandhic school* individually, thus bringing in a definite division in the srivaishnava faith. Those who adhere to the *Sri Bhashya school* came to be known as *Vadagalai* and those who owed allegiance to the *Prabhandic school* were known as *Tengalai*.

The primary function of these *mathas* is to serve as repositories of sectarian ideology and the propagation of the same among a wide range of its adherents. *Mathas* also acted as centres of learning. The monks of the *mathas* taught not only the scriptures of their respective creeds but also secular literature. The duty of educating the society rested with the *mathas*.

The constitution of the *mathas* was based upon the monarchic principle. The head of the *matha* the supreme authority of the institution. He had the power to nominate his own successor from among his disciples. The monks of the *matha* were under his control and they acted as the final authority concerning all matters relating to the religious activities of their adherents. They had the authority to initiate people into monkhood and accept new disciples.

Though these *mathas* played a major role in the socio-religious life of the country from about the 15th century onwards, the history of these *mathas* is yet to be properly studied by the historians. However, every *matha* maintains its own historical account and a few facts drawn about Ahobilamatha be mentioned here.

##### A. Van-Sathagopa Jiyar matha (Ahobhila matha)

This *matha* is popularly known as *Ahobila matha* and this association is because of its headquarters being placed at Ahobilam in the 15th and 18th centuries.

This *matha* was one of the influential *mathas* of the *Vadagalai* sect. The *Jiyars* of this *matha* appear to have played an important part in popularising Srivaishnavism.

Van-Satagopa Jiyar (1436-1516), the founder of the *matha*, is said to have been born in Melkote and did his studies at Kanchi and is believed to have received initiation into *sanyasa* from the hands of god Narasimha of Ahobilam.

According to the *Matha Guruparmapai*, this happened way back on the fifth lunar day of bright fortnight in the Saka year 1320 (1398 A.D.) - *Bahudanya, purattasi* - exactly when he was 20 years old. According to tradition, it appears that, an idol of Lakshminarasimha was found to have landed into his hands. This is the processional deity that Ahobila Jiyars have been worshipping since then and found carrying wherever they go for religious propagation.<sup>9</sup>

Ramanuja is said to have classified the Jiyars into three categories, namely *aradhana Jiyars*, like the Ahobila Jiyars, *Adyapaka Jiyars* like the Vanamamalai Jiyars and Tirupati and Srirangam Jiyars, and *Paricharaka Jiyars*. Sri Satakopa Yati has been chosen as the Chief *Archaka*.

Sri Satakopa Yati, as he was called hence forward, settled at Ahobilam in the inhospitable regions and finding that the Chenchus (the tribals) were already the votaries of the Lord, he decided to work amongst them and uplift them. He also appointed a class of missionaries known as 'Ahobila Dasars' to work among them and bring about a transformation in their life.

He organised regular worship at Ahobilam. The nucleus of the Ahobila *matha* may be said to have been laid with Sri Satakopa yati becoming the custodian of worship and ritual in the Ahobilam temple.

Ahobilam, unlike with their din and bustle of the celebrated places like Kanchi or Srirangam or Tirupati was a holy place distinguished for its serene atmosphere. He stayed there and arranged for the regular worship and other rituals.

A shrine for the founder of the Ahobila *matha* was built to the West of the Nammalwar shrine, and he then set out on a tour which took him to Melkote (his birth place), Tirupati, Kanchi, Tuppul, Sholinghur and Srirangam. In Srirangam, he established a *matha* and a shrine for Desika within the Sri Ranganath Temple. He returned to Tirunaranapuram (Melkote) where he shed the coils of the mortal existence on Saturday, the eleventh day (*Ekadasi*) of the dark fortnight in the month of *Chaitra* in the year *Bahudanya* corresponding to *Kali Yuga* 4560 (April 1458 A.D.). He was entombed at Tirunaranapuram.

The following are some of the literary sources, which reveal that,

1. Allasani Peddanna known as the *Andhra Kavita Pitamaha* and the author of *Manu Charita* - was his disciple. He described the first Jiyar as a refuge of learning and a dispeller of the thick darkness of ignorance through the moonlight of his kindness.
2. Krishnadevaraya himself is said to have praised the efforts of reading the Jiyar in spreading Vaishnavism in the Empire.
3. The famous divine music composer Tallapaka Annamacharyulu was his contemporary and his disciple.
4. The Jiyar was a disciple of Nainacharya, the apostolic head from 1371-1410 A.D.
5. Manavala Mahamuni (1370-1444 A.D.), Kandadai Ramanuja Iyengar, the first, second and third Brahma Tantra Swatantra Jiyars of the Parakala *Matha* were his other distinguished and eminent contemporaries.

The inscriptions of Saluva Narasimha, who usurped the Vijayanagar throne, throw light on the activities of the first Jiyar.

Dr. S.K.Ayyangar observes that the first Pontiff's activities in Tirupati are borne out by these inscriptions beyond a shadow of doubt and also that he had established his reputation as an *Acharya* and attracted a number of devoted followers in the temple town.

His connections with Kanchi are revealed by an inscription 411 of 1919<sup>10</sup> in Kanchi Varadaraja Temple.

A copper plate found at Tonnur in Karnataka State mentions Srinivasa *Yati* ■ the *Guru* of Krishnadevaraya.<sup>11</sup>

Two inscriptions at Srirangam Temple<sup>12</sup> throw light ■ the commendable activities of the *Jiyar*.

All these established the activity of the *Jiyar* in the temple town and the commemoration by Krishnadevaraya himself by providing for taking out the Deity (*Nam Perumal*) on the *Jyeshtha Asterism* Day and the distribution of ■ share of the offerings to the disciples ■ the *Jiyar matha* at Srirangam.

Sri Ahobila *matha* has the proud privilege to offer spiritual service and humanitarian relief to one and all right from its establishment by the *Jiyar* Srimat Adivan Satakopa Yateendra Mahadesikan. The rulers, the laity, the *Pandits* and the pious people were equally entranced by the personality and the musical powers of the *Jiyar*.

Not only the Orissa Kings, but also the Pandian and Vijayanagar Kings, apart from many feudatories and chieftains of several regions were disciples and admirers of this *Jiyar* ■ well as subsequent *Jiyars* of Ahobila *matha*. The dawn of Vijayanagara Kingdom heralded a new era in the annals of the history of Andhra Pradesh, says Dr.M.Narasimhacharya in his book on the Narasimha cult. "They were not only popular as patrons of art and letters but they were also staunch devotees and upholders of the Hindu '*Dharma*'. They adopted stern measures to defend and protect lands and temples from the onslaught of the Muslim invaders. Srimad Adivan Satakopa who appeared on the scene at this right moment ■ the specific command of Lord Lakshminarasimha. He donned the robes of *Sanyasi* gifted by God and made Ahobilam (part of Vijayanagara Kingdom) his centre of activities. He rallied a large number of Srivaishnavite disciples and set up a number of *mathas* at different places to popularise the works of Ramanuja and Vedanta Desika".

The divinity in him helped to restore the kingdom to Orissa King. He ■ able to help Pandian king realise the spiritual aspects and converted him into Srivaishnavism. Krishnadevaraya was so overwhelmed with this *Jiyar* that when he poured out his devotion for Andal in his famous grand literary piece *Amuktamalyada*, he makes ■ special mention of Sri Ramanuja, Vedanta Desika and, of course Sri Adivan Satagopa *Jiyar*. He heaps a shower of praise on Satagopa *Jiyar* and sings his glory. Allasani Peddanna, one of the eight scholars (*Ashtadiggajas*) had dedicated his *kavya* *Harikathasara* to the first *Jiyar* of Ahobila *matha*. He also showers his reverential praise on the *Azhagiyaingar* in his another *kavya* *Manucharitra*. The grant he received from Krishnadevaraya was a village called '*Gogatam*' which he renamed as *Satagopapuram* in honour of Adivan Satagopa. Allasani Peddanna who adorned the royal court of Krishnadevaraya had his *Samasrayana* and *Mantra-upadesam* at the feet of this first *Jiyar* and henceforth called himself as "Peddanna Iyengar".

Likewise, another staunch devotee of Adivan Satagopan was the famous Annamacharya, whose songs ■ Lord Venkateswara are marked by devotional fervour and philosophical profundity. He also had his *samasrayanam* under this *Jiyar*. A gist of the song of Tallapakkam Annamacharya on Adivan Satagopa Yateendra Mahadesikan is given below:

"Behold! This is ■ revered Satakopa *Muni*, who is easily accessible to all and ■ whom Lord Hari Himself is the guide and refuge! He is our golden path for the final abode of beatitude, the last word in scriptures, the soul pure and free from sin, and the boat with which to cross the river Viraja in

Vaikuntha He is the divine lamp of wisdom illuminating all the worlds, the redeemer from sins and the raft which enables us to cross this **saṁsāra** He is an ardent devotee of **the** presiding deities of Srirangam, Kancheepuram, Venkatagiri and Ahobilam and a prince among ascetics!"

Having established Sri Ahobila **matha** and having displayed dynamic leadership in **it**, the first **Jiyar** Sri Adivan Satagopa Yateendra Mahadesikan made the task easier for his successor **to** carry on the challenging job of spiritual ennoblement The fact that the second **Jiyar**-Sriman Narayana Yateendra Mahadesikan **was** the one chosen to lead is evident from the title given **to** him as *Shashti Prabhandha Nirmatha* - (author of sixty books) a title given by the first **Jiyar** in recognition of his versatility It **is** remarkable that like the first **Jiyar**, this 2nd **Jiyar's** birth **was** also *Jyeshtha* He built a prosperous village called *Maduramangalam* and by duly installing the image of his master **in** the temple of Selvapillai (at the command of that God) and another in the *Brindavan* (a lodgement of the astral body of **a** saint) of his master **at** Melkote (again at the command of Sri Lakshminarasimha), the **Jiyar** had amply carried out the noble tradition of the first **Jiyar**, his *Guru* His *sanchara* took him to places like Kancheepuram, Sholingapuram, Tirupati and Ahobilam, Srirangam and Melkote where, after a reigning period of 15 years, he attained *paramapada* His *Brindavanam* is also **at** Melkote

Sri Parankusa Yateendra Mahadesika was the third **Jiyar** in the line of **the** **the** He spent his days in teaching *Sribhashya* and *Srimad Rahasyatrayasara* to **his** disciples **at** Kancheepuram His contribution was the creation of villages like Neeralur, Urugadam, Nemmly, Kadankarai, Pilaaputhur and Kalathur By a divine command, he went to Srirangam where he **was** instantly attracted to the Lord there as also Sri Ramanuja whose grace he abundantly derived and breathed his last there in tranquillity

The fourth **Jiyar** Sri Srinivasa Yateendra Mahadesika needs special mention because he undertook *padayatra* to **the** far-off places as Ayodhya, Gokul and Brindavan, all in the North India before he settled down **at** Singar Kovil, spreading the message of Ramanuja and Vedanta Desika He realised that his days were drawing to **a** close in this world and was in search of **a** worthy successor The Lord appeared **in** his dream saying, '*Sarvatantra Svatantra* is coming to take the *Peetam* and hence do not be concerned' whereupon the fourth **Jiyar** was jubilantly awaiting him Lakshminarasimha similarly appeared in the dream of one *Kandalur Svami* asking him to proceed immediately **to** the fourth **Jiyar's** camp They exchanged the substance of their respective dream messages However, since *Kandalur Svami* happened to belong to Tenkalai sect, the fourth **Jiyar** asked him to have his *Barasamarpanam* done then and there at his (4th **Jiyar's**) feet and having done this the *Sanyasa* **was** given to him It **is** **a** gesture of magnanimity on the part of both the **Jiyars** in that while the fifth **Jiyar** respected the *Vadakalai* tradition by having *Barasamarpana* at the 4th **Jiyar's** feet, the fourth **Jiyar** directed that during the time of the 5th **Jiyar's** reign, both the *sampradayams* would be respected *Kandalur Svami* **was** then duly installed as the fifth **Jiyar** bearing the asrama name *Sarvatantra Svatantra Satagopa Yateendra Mahadesikan*

The fifth **Jiyar** made tours mostly in the north of India and when his period ended, he **was** laid to rest on the banks of the river Krishna It **is** again the magnanimity of this fifth **Jiyar** that he, in turn, initiated the famous *Shashta Parankusa Svami* of the *Vadakalai* into *Sanyasa asrama*

### **Shashta Parankusa Yateendra Mahadesika, The Sixth Jiyar**

After the first **Jiyar**, the sixth **Jiyar** Srimad Shashta Parankusa Yateendra Mahadesikan became equally famous for his spiritual and miraculous powers S N Venkatesa Aiyar writes in his '*History of the Ahobila Math*' "This **Jiyar**," he says, " **was** deservedly considered as one of **the** most powerful personages **who** adorned the pontifical seat Even at the outset, in connection with **the** **Jiyar** **was** meet with another well known personage *Panchamathabhanjanam Tatachariar* (sister's son of this **Jiyar**

in his pre-sanyasin life). This Tatachariar was also noteworthy ■ being the father of the great Lakshmikumara (Kotikanyakadanam Tatachariar) - the famous person who gilded the Varadarajasvami Temple, Kanchipuram. He was ■ person of great importance and influence - being the Guru of Venkatapathiraya (Venkata I) 1575 to 1614 A.D. and also of Venkata II 1630 to 1642 A.D. - both Kings of Vijayanagara in its later days of decline. Any student of the Araveedu dynasty of Vijayanagara cannot afford to miss this Tatachariar family in the study of the outstanding spiritual teachers of the time. This Lakshmikumara Tatachariar has claimed himself as having crowned both Venkata the First and Venkata the Second and used the valuable presents given to him by the Emperors - for gilding the Tirupati and Kanchipuram temples. The sixth Jiyar with whom we ■■ now particularly concerned was the guru and teacher of the Tatachariar - the original founder of the family. Inscriptions both at Tirupati and Kanchipuram state that the sixth Jiyar founded ■ settlement at *Bhashyapuram* in Cuddapah district, on the banks of the north Pennar. He was a very learned man and taught *Vedanta* and other philosophies to numerous disciples. The Ahobila *matha* became quite wealthy during his tenure, possessing a large number of villages granted in *Sarvamanyam*, besides numerous herds of cattle, number of elephants, camels and other paraphernalia of a rich *matha*. The sixth Jiyar travelled upto Badarinath in the Himalayas and visited all the famous Vishnu shrines in India. The modern Vaishnavite *agraharams* of Injumedu and Thaiyar trace their origin to this Jiyar.

A reference is made to this Jiyar in the *History of the Cult of Narasimha in Andhra Pradesh* wherein it is said that "both during the period of the fifth Jiyar and the sixth Jiyar, Ahobila *matha* was the nerve-centre of Srivaishnavism in Andhra Pradesh and brought many influential families as well as the ■■■■■ into its fold. It is stated that the fifth Jiyar was the spiritual preceptor of the Nandyala Chiefs who were Vijayanagara feudatories..." The sixth of the apostolic line of the Ahobila Math, *Shashta Parankusa*, says Dr.M.Narasimhacharya, was respected by King Mukundadeva of Kalinga and he instituted the worship of *Alvars* at Purushottam (Puri) which is also known ■ Jagannatha shrine. An epigraph of 1555 A.D., during the reign of Sadasiva, mentions that Shashta Parankusa was the trustee of the Ahobila Temple and the agent of Aliya-Ramappadeva Maharaja. This Jiyar is stated by the *Satsampradaya Muktavali* to be the contemporary of Sadasivaraya and he received from Sadasiva the village of Bhashyapura on the banks of the river Pennar. He was the author of ■ number of works including *Narasimha-stava*. Tradition has it that this sixth Jiyar while fervently worshipping at Ahobilam was commanded by the god, Lakshminarasimha to be ever present there to do *pooja* (ceremonial worship) to Him. In order to do that, he had disappeared into the cave of Ahobilam which now remains closed (This place is shown to pilgrims at the Upper Ahobilam Temple where it seems that even now early in the morning the pealing of bells and chanting can be heard by the devout.) He was, however, never again seen afterwards though ■■ are told, very pathetically that his *Sishyas* - particularly Tatachariar - stayed outside the cave for several days without meals and water, wept and cried out for him requesting him to come out - but it was all in vain.

### C. ■■ Jiyar - Sri Satagopa Yateendra Mahadesikan

Like the first Jiyar, this seventh Jiyar also became a *sanyasi* at the young age of twenty five. His scholarship was very high and he earned many titles. "An inscription of S.1501 (A.D. 1578-79) from the Lower Ahobilam, records certain stirring political events that happened ■ the time, ■ the initiative of Van Satagopa Jiyangaru, the seventh head of the *matha* of Ahobilam, the recapture of Ahobilam from the Muslims. The Jiyangaru approached the King Ranga I of Vijayanagara and appealed ■ him ■ recover the temple from the Muslims. As the King had regard for the Jiyar, he issued orders ■ his chief, who, proceeding with the Jiyar ■ Ahobilam, defeated the Muslims, repaired the temple and established the Jiyar ■ Ahobilam." Dr. M.Narasimhacharya records further in his '*History of the Cult of Narasimha in Andhra Pradesh*' that this is no mean achievement for the

*Jiyar*, who took the lead to drive away the Muslims from the temple. This *Jiyar* was not only famous for this act of resuscitation of the Ahobilam temple, but also popular as the author of a *Vasantika Parinayam*. The theme of the drama is the marriage of Lord Narasimha with a Chenchu woman. The importance of his work is that it is the first of its kind in Sanskrit literature, which mentions the association of God Narasimha with Chenchita, a Chenchu woman. The story of Narasimha and Chenchita became popular not only among the Chenchus but also among the rural folk. It made the Chenchus feel even now that Chenchita is their woman and God Narasimha is their tutelary deity. Prior to the beginning of the *Brahmotsavam*, even today it is the custom for the *Utsava* Narasimha to tour several villages around Ahobilam and accept their hospitality. After touring from Ahobilam to Srirangam, this seventh *Jiyar* found his resting place at Srirangam itself where his *Brindavanam* lies.

The *Jiyars* of Ahobila *matha* from the 43rd to 45th occupy an important place in the history of Ahobilam and Srivaishnavism. Various development programmes and religious activities were carried out by 44th and 45th *Jiyars* of Ahobila *matha*.

The most important work is the construction of the *Gopuram* in 1985 to Srirangam temple, with thirteen tiers. Built at a cost of 15 million rupees, the *Rajagopuram* is the tallest tower in Asia, measuring 165 feet in length and 150 feet in breadth, the tower rises upwards by 226 feet in height.

## 5. Ahobila Matha

The presiding deity of the *Matha* of course, is Sri Lakshmi Narasimha better known as Malola-Narasimha. The glory of this ancient idol has been sanctified by touch and by daily *aradhana* three times a day performed right from the first *Jiyar* Sri Adivan Satakopa Yateendra Mahadesikan up to the present Holiness. Sri Van Satagopa Sri Narayana Yateendra Mahadesikan.

1. Malola Narasimha is the centre piece of attraction in the mobile silver Mandapam seated on the jewelled *Dolai* with His consort on His lap, holding *Sankha* and *Chakra* and with His right foot adorned with sandal (*Paduka*). The other equally famous idols that are enshrined therein are:
2. *Swarna Narasimha* said to have been given to the first *Jiyar* by King Prataparudra. There is a legend behind it. It is said that the King's daily routine included moulding a *Linga* in gold and presenting it to a Brahmin before he partook food. One day when he ordered the smith to mould a *Linga* as usual, the goldsmith found, to his surprise, that the mould turned out a golden Lakshminarasimha instead of the *Linga*. He melted the idol and cast it again which also turned out to be that of Lakshminarasimha. This was brought to the attention of the king in whose presence it happened once more. It was then that some pious men brought to his notice that a great saint by name Sri Adivan Satakopa Yateendra Mahadesikan was camping in the vicinity worshipping the Lakshminarasimha of Ahobilam. The king taking the idol went thither and prostrated before the *Jiyar* and narrated the miracle, and then and there became a convert to Srivaishnavism on seeing the lustre of divinity on the *Jiyar's* face. He duly presented the idol of *Swarna Narasimha* to the *Jiyar* and also grants for daily worship.
3. Mangalagiri Panaka Narasimha: This was donated by a devotee to the 42nd *Jiyar*.
4. Kannan (Krishna) to whom *dolotsavam* is usually done. *Beejakasharams* are found on this idol and per tradition, Ramanuja was performing the puja of this icon. It is believed that the women beget children on performing *dolotsavam* to this image.
5. Sri Ranganathan reclining on Adishesha with Lakshmi.
6. Attthigiri Varadan which was with the great scholar Nadathur Ammal later given to Sri Adivan Satakopa Svami by the former's grandson Gatikasatam Ammal.
7. Srinivasa with Alamelu Mangathayaru seated in His chest.
8. Sampath Narayana Yadugiri Nachiyar.
9. Parimalarangan with Sridevi and Bhudevi;
10. Lakshmi Varahan;
11. Bhuvarahan;
12. Adikesava with His Consorts;
13. Sudarshana;
14. Sri Rama, Seetha and Lakshmana;
15. Aravamudhan;

16. Hayagreeva; 17. Sri Andal; 18. Rangamannar. A number of Salagraamas and idols of Vishwakshena, Nammalvar, Kaliyan, Ramanuja, Vedanta Desika, Sri Adivan Satagopa Yateendra Mahadesika and subsequent Jiyars- all together present a scene of the utmost divine plane.

The 45th *Jiyar* the present *peetadhipathi* of Ahobila *matha*, is 'Sri van Satagopa Sri Narayana Yateendra Mahadesikan'. The ceremonial appointment took place on Oct. 21, 1991, He has been carrying on his duty, guidance, training and propagation of the ideals and thus bearing on the torch of the glorious traditions of the Ahobila *matha*.

In the history of Ahobila *matha*, Gadwal occupies an important place. Because of its proximity to Ahobilam and because of the abundance of scholars around these parts, Gadwal became a beehive of Vaishnavite religious activities. The *Samasthanadhipathis* of this place generously patronised the spiritual and cultural activities and Raja Somabhupal became a disciple of the 24th *Jiyar* - Sri van Satakopa Sri Parankusa Yateendra Mahadesika (1764- 1776). This is the first reference in the *Guru Parampara* and this Raja is said to have presented the *Matha* many villages, silver palanquins and the usual paraphernalia. The 25th *Jiyar* had won the hearts of Raja Sarabhoji of Tanjore, the Mysore Maharaja and naturally the Gadwal Maharaja too.

The Raja of Gadwal went personally to Ahobilam where the 25th *Jiyar* was camping, and after prostrating before him, invited the *Jiyar* to visit Gadwal and escorted him to Gadwal with full honours and retinue. *Guruparampara* records an incident which bears out *Jiyar*'s vast powers of learning and disputation. As this *Jiyar* escorted by the Gadwal Raja was on his way to Gadwal, near Surapuram, a village in Cuddapah district, he was accosted by Kireeti Venkatachariar, a reputed scholar and famous disputant who defiantly challenged the *Jiyar* on *Visishtadwaita* principles. It seems the debate lasted for fifteen days. When the Swami felt himself flagging, by a divine command *Satadushini* and *Srutaprakasika* the records of authority were brought into play leading to the irrefutable triumph of the *Jiyar*. Venkatachariar fell at the feet of the *Jiyar*. Removing the bell of victory from his palanquin, Venkatachariar tied it to the palanquin of the *Jiyar*. He became an ardent disciple of the *Jiyar* who in a gesture of magnanimity variously honoured Venkatachariar. Having witnessed this, the reverence of the Gadwal Raja towards the *Jiyar* increased multi-fold.

The shrines of Narasimha at Ahobilam and other places in Andhra Pradesh received royal patronage as the Narasimha Cult gained momentum under the *Jiyars* of Ahobila *matha*.

The present day Gadwal has completely lost the glory. The last Raja of Gadwal left for Hyderabad where the royal family settled down permanently. The fort though the palace-building, now houses the Rani Adilakshmi College though parts of the building are dilapidated. The Kesava Temple is in ruins. In its vestigial form only, the worship goes on. Many idols kept in a row (as if in display) uncleared and undusted in the main temple precincts. The priest, though employed by the royal family perhaps is ill-paid. As a result, regular worship cannot be carried on. The Ahobila *matha* is in much worse condition having been ravaged by the passage of time. The *Pedda Agraharam*, which once abounded with Brahmin scholars still exists but without the old tradition. Not more than six Brahmin families live there. The land adjoining the *matha* has been retrieved by the Math Agent a Committee has been formed with Sri Rajagopalachari, as the President and Sri Ramakant as Secretary. Sri Ramulu Gowd, a leading Advocate of Gadwal shown a lot of interest and as the and Legal Advisor of the committee is quite keen on renovating not only the *Matha* but also *Brindavan* of the 27th *Jiyar* situated on the bank of the Krishna river which is also totally devastated.

**Letters of Nawabs, Rajas and Residents connected with the Ahobila Matha is appended**

Mysore Residency

21.10.1812

Sri Ahobila Swamy, a Brahmin High Priest proceeds from Mysore to Kumbakonam via. Salem, Srirangam etc. with three elephants, one camel, four horses, three palanquins, sixty bullocks, two hundred Brahmins and about one hundred servants and attendants.

All officers in authority under the British Government are requested to allow him to pass without molestation.

(Sd) COLE,  
British Resident

21.10.1812

From

The Honourable Mr. COLE,  
The British Resident,  
MYSORE.

To

The commanders of Forts, commandants of Garrisons, Thasildars, persons guarding mountain passes and out houses and such like persons in Authority in the British territories (2) Sri Ahobila Swami Etc., Etc., (3) You should get them all the things that they require for Proper prices. Sri Swamy is a very respectable man.

He should be received with all Honours.

P.S: The Swami and his party are to be allowed to pass freely through your respective divisions.

(Sd) Cole.

21.10.1812.

To

Ayyalur Ramachandra Naidu,  
Police Superintendent, Etc., Etc.,

You are hereby informed that as (1) Sri Ahobilaswami is coming on a tour and as he is a very great and respectable person coming with all and every equipments you are to issue strict order to the peons and servants within your jurisdiction to go and wait upon him and render him all the assistance he may want, to be very careful that there is no disturbance from others during the time the gentleman stays there and you are to arrange that the Honours customarily shown him in the places within your jurisdiction are properly shown him. As this is a necessary matter, you are to issue strict order to your peons and servants not to conduct themselves with indifference towards him in the least degree.

(Sd) Dt. Collector  
Chingleput, 4th May 1808.



N B Even in 1944 when His Holiness the 42nd Jiyar stayed in my native village Singanallur, near Coimbatore City he had with him (1) Sri Karyam, Secretary (2) Manager and his assistants (3) One Elephant and a very big tusker it is! Oh! What a lot of trouble and anxiety it gave us! (4) One Camel, which unfortunately died during the Chaturmasya (5) two horses (6) 23 double Bullock carts and 46 stout-bulls to drag them (7) a dozen and more of Brahmins to chant the litanies-morning-day and night-*Viswa Rupam* (morning song) *Abigamana* (Noon day puja) *Iyya* (mid-afternoon), Night Puja (8) Brahmin Pandits to discourse in the Sastras to the laity (9) several advanced students to learn the *Rahasyatrayasara* of V Desika (10) Cooks, peons, cart drivers etc (in all) about seventy (11) 4 police constables with guns etc to guard the Gadi Jewels etc (These police are paid by the Nizam state as per mamool and are part of the Nizam's police force)

### Mysore Rajah's letter to Panthi XXVI

Extract from a letter addressed to Sri Ranganatha Yatindra Maha Desikan to the then Head Priest of Ahobilam Mutt by His Highness Krishna Rajah Odayar, the Maha Rajah of Mysore on 28 12 1813

(We) Krishna Raja Odayar of Mysore (known as) the greatest of all kings, the king of kings, very powerful, Peerless, styled the king of Angles and Men (Deva Narapati), the greatest Warrior in all the world, who shines like the sun sprung from the line of Yadukula (dynasty) and honoured with the following emblems, viz, sankha, (conch), chakram (circle) Ankusam (the instrument used by the elephant driver), the axe, the Makara (fish), Sarabha (bird), Ganda Bhairunda (bird), Bhuvара (pig), Hunuman (monkey), Garuda (kite) and kathirwar (the lion) and such like, (supplicate as follows after making Sastanga Namaskarums (complete limbs prostration) to your feet)

By the Grace of Swamy, I and all others are doing well up to Tuesday, the 6th day of Pushya Sudda of Srimukha year (28th December 1813), you must be pleased to direct the sending of Srimukhams (letters) always, about the honours and blessings gained by virtue of your penance. The Prasadam (fruits), Mantrakshata (blessed Rice) and cloth which you graciously pleased to remit through Bhashyakara (Religious quarters) having reached us with the Sreemukham, we have been saved and raised to salvation. We have placed the same over our heads. We are filled with joy, having been blessed with full particulars of the splendid manner with the chaturmasya festival after the receipt of yearly payments, Shawls, Kashaya Vastram (red-coloured cloth) sent through Mukum Srinivasachariar most learned in the Vedas. As we shall annually send before the commencement of the said festival money, Shawls and Kashaya Vastrams according to custom, you must be pleased to accept them and use them for the worship of God and direct the sending of Sreemukhams (letters) always showing in detail the manner in which your penance is being performed daily. In this manner (We) supplicate making complete prostration

Signature of Maharaja of Mysore

28 12 1813

N B - The Poligars of Vanaparti and Gadwal (vide further letters) are Hindu poligars in the Hyderabad State, but they are related to the (Asaf Jah) Present Nizam's dynasty. They along with Mysore, Madura, Trichinopoly, Tanjore, were part of the Vijayanagar Political System. Even today, the Palanquin-bearers of the Ahobila Muth are supplied by the Raja of Gadwal.

### Letter No.5

Seal of Mahomed Akbar Shah,  
Police Superintendent of Nizam's Police Force

Notice is hereby given to all Gumustahs in the service of jaghirdars, Faujiders, Choukedars, watchmen, toll-gates men etc That one Narasimha Swamy, a Hindu Priest, accompanied by 150 adherents with palanquin and 16 holy bearers, bandies, elephants, camels, horses, cows, etc Will shortly proceed through and ■ the direction of Byapur and you are therefore, hereby warned not to interrupt for the toll-tax during his passage and to afford every facility to pass him safely

Written and dated the 18th Jamadee - Oossanee 1250 Hijri (10th November 1833)

Signature in Persian Characters

N ■ - The above Narasimhaswami ■■■ only refer to His Holiness - the 28th Jiyar (1833-1836)

### Letter No. 6

Letter addressed to Sri Satakopa Sri Ranganatha Satagopa Yatindra Maha Desikan, The Head Priest (28) of Ahobila Muttam by Raja Chandu Lal the Prime-Minister of His Exalted Highness the Nizam of Hyderabad ■ 16th September 1833 (Translated from Persian)

Raja Chandu Lal, the servant of your servant's offers his complete prostrations at all times in the day and night By the unbounded favour of your divine grace, your servants etc, ■■■ doing well till Friday the first Adhika Bhadrpadu month You must be pleased to favour me with sacred letter from time to time letting me know, how, the daily feeding of Brahmns and the inculcation of the Religious Vedas and Sanskrit Theology and Philosophy are progressing at your sacred quarters The sacred letter which your divine grace has been pleased to favour ■■■ with, was duly put into my hands and its contents were understood and I was elated with joy

When your divine grace advances towards the northern countries you must be pleased to pass by this road and thereby remove the ■■■ of myself and others by casting upon ■ a mere sidelook of your Muttam at these quarters, ardently waiting for your divine arrival for ■ complete expiation of their ■■■ I am elated with joy and consider that it is the fruitful result of the performance of several virtuous acts in my former births that made me an object to be favourably treated by your divine pleasure

What can I write more to a person, able, who is omniscient and master of all learning?

Friday the 1st Adhika Bhadrpada suddha of Vijaya (16th September 1833)

The Persian seal of Raja Chandu Lal, Dewan of His (Exalted) Highness the Nizam of Hyderabad

### Letter No.7

Raja of Vanaparti's letter

Letters, addressed to Srman Satakopa Sri Veeraraghava Yatindra Maha Desikan, the then Head-priest of the Ahobilam Muttum (32) by His Highness the Raja of Vanaparthi ■ 19 7 1852

I, who being the seat of ■ thousand faults, am drowned in the middle of the dreadful sea of family life without any ■■■ of escape, come to your protection And Oh! God! keep me under your control by thy simple mercy This is ■■■ and no falsehood Listen to ■ single humble prayer of mine If you

do not show ■■■ pity you cannot find any other object worthy of your Grace. Rameswara Raja, the king of Vanaparte Desam (country) the humble servant of Ramanuja, who classing himself with one of your favoured disciples, is ever expecting your instructions, makes to you prostrations in conjunction with his wife and all his people in accordance with the saying - My prostrations to him who is beyond description or imagination who shines like ■■■ both for words and fancy, who is possessed of great and endless salvation and who is the great ocean of boundless mercy.

By the Grace of your feet, I have been living happily with my wife and child and followers at Kanthamal village up to the 3rd Sukla of Sravana of the current Paridhavi (19th July 1852). A letter ■■■ sent by the chief agent of your sannadhi. In that letter, it was written that your noble personage felt a little sick and that a physician should be sent. I am sorry for it. Two persons Ramanuja and Lakshmana have been sent to give medicine to you. Please take medicine from them, keep good diet and you will be all right in ■■■ days. I pray that you will give me joy, who am your chief disciple by directing a letter to be written to me immediately regarding the present state of your health. Why write more. The servant of the worshipper of Lakshmi Narasimha.

The seal and signature of Rameswara Ramanuja Dasa.

## Letter No.8

Maha Raja of Gadwal's letter - December 1814

Letter addressed to Srivan Satakopa Sri Ranganatha Yatindra Maha Desikan, the then head priest of Ahobilam Muttam (Head Priest XXVI) by His Highness the Maharaja of Gadwal, December 1814.

Raja Rama Bhoopla Rayadu your most obedient and humble servant offers his adorations. Myself and all my retinue are doing well here up to 4th Margasira Sudha of this year. You must be pleased to favour ■■■ from time to time with sacred letter letting me know to good progress in the daily feeding of Brahmins and advance made in the cultivation and inculcation of sacred Vedas and Hidnu Theology and philosophy at your sacred quarters. The sacred letter which your divine pleasure has been pleased to send in the month of Sravana Suddha through A. Raghavacharlu and Venkata Dikshithilu was received with all honours and due dignity on the auspicious day of 10th Karthika Bahula.

I placed it ■■■ my head and thereby I was absolved from all sins. I was directed to send camels, peons, and palanquin bearers to enable your divine grace to travel to the Northern countries to dispel all gloomy darkness of ignorance and spread lustre by the glorious rays of your divine learning and thus achieve universal triumph. A little delay ■■■ caused in procuring a pass-port from the town of riches (Hyderabad) and it is herewith sent as per your directions. Be pleased to place your sacred feet in this part of the country and absorb all your servants from sin. All the remaining circumstances would have been brought to your divine knowledge by the letters addressed to your divine grace by Ramanujacharlu, the Muttum agent at this place. Thus I tender my endless adorations to your sacred feet.

Royal seal of the Raja of Gadwal.

(Courtesy: History of the Ahobila Mutt - An Outline by S.N.Venkatesa Iyer)

**Particulars regarding the Tirunakshatrams (birth-stars) etc. of the Azhagiyasingars of the Math**

Peetham and Tirunamam	Tirunakshatram	Commencement of Asthanam	Departure to Tirunadu	Duration of the Administration of the Asthanam	Location of Brindvanam
1. Sirmad Adivan Sathakopa Yateendra Mahadesikan	Year : Siddharthi Month : Purattasi Sukhla Paksham; Panchami, Thursday, Star : Kettai Dhanurlangam (September 1379 A.D.)	Year : Bahudhanya Month : Purattasi Sukhla Paksham; Panchami, Thursday; September 1398 A.D.	Year : Bahudhanaya Month : Chittirai Krishna Paksham Ekadasi Saturday at 14-15 Nazhagai, April 1458 A.D.	Year - Months  59-7	At the Tirukkalyana Teeram, Tirunarayanapuram
2. Sri Ven Sathakopa Srimannarayana Yateendra Mahadesikan	Month : Avani Kettai Nakshatram	Year : Bahudhanya April, 1458 A.D.	Year : Nandana Month : Panguni- Krishna Paksham Dwiteeyai, March 1473 A.D.	14-11	Tirunarayanapuram
3. Srivan Sathakopa Sri Parankusha Yateendra Mahadesikan	Month : Thai Star : Tiruvonam	Year : Nandanam Month : Panguni - Poomimai March, 1474 A.D.	Year : Krodhi Month : Thai Krishna Chaturthi January, 1485 A.D.	11-10	Sri Mushnam
4. Srivan Sathakopa Srinivasa Mahadesikan	Month : Margazhi Star : Chittirai	Year : Krodhi Month : Thai (January, 1485 A.D.)	Year : Pramadeeshaa Month : <del>Chittirai</del> - <del>Krishna</del> Paksham Chaturthi April 1493 A.D.	8-3	Singhar Koil
5. Srivan Sathakopa Sri Sarvatantra Swatantra Sri Sathakopa Yateendra Mahadesikan	Month : Karthigai Star : Thirukarthigai	Year : Pramoduta Month : Chittirai April 1493 A.D.	Year : Kalyukthi Month : Thai Krishna <del>Pachami</del> Navami (January 1490 A.D.)	5-9	Krishna Teeram

6. Sri van Satakopa Sri Shasta Parankusha Yateendra Mahadesikan	Month : Thai Poorattasi	Year : Kalyukthi Month : Thai January 1499 A.D.	Year : Angeerasa Month : Masi Krishna Paksham February, 1513 A.D.	Years - Months 14-1	Entered into the Guha (Cave) at Ahobiam
7. Sri van Satakopa Sri Satakopa Yateendra Mahadesikan	Month : Vaikasi Star : Vishakam	Year : Angeerasa Month : Masi February 1513 A.D.	Year : Visha Month : Panguni Poomimai April, 1522 A.D.	9-2	Srirangam
8. Sri van Satakopa Sri Parankusha Yateendra Mahadesikan	Month : Margazhi Star : Ashwani	Year : Visha Month : Panguni April 1522 A.D.	Year : Hevilambi Month : Margazhi Krishna Paksham Panchami January, 1538 A.D.	15-9	Srirangam
9. Sri van Satakopa Sri van Narayana Yateendra Mahadesikan	Month : Ani Tru-Adirai	Year : Hevilambi Month : Margazhi January, 1538 A.D.	Year : Sobhakrit Month : Ani Krishna Chaturthi July 1542 A.D.	4-6	Sri Ahobiam
10. Sri van Satakopa Sri Satakopa Yateendra Mahadesikan	Month : Vaikasi Vishakam Star	Year : Sobhakrit Month : Ani July 1542 A.D.	Year : Siddharthi Month : Ani Krishna Paksham Chaturthi July 1550 A.D.	17-0	Triunayanapuram
11. Sri van Satakopa Sri Srinivasa Yateendra Mahadesikan	Month : Ayyappasi Star : Moolam	Year : Siddharthi Month : Ani July 1559 A.D.	Year : Vilambi Month : Chittirai Krishna Paksham Chaturdasi April 1598 A.D.	38-9	Srirangam
12. Sri van Satakopa Sri van Narayana Yateendra Mahadesikan	Month : Purattasi Poorva Phalguni	Year : Vilambi Month : Chittirai April 1600 A.D.	Year : Angeerasa Month : Purattasi Krishna Paksham Shashti September, 1632 A.D.	34-5	Triunayanapuram

13. Srivan Satakopa Sri Veera Raghava Yateendra Mahadesikan	Month : Ani Uturadam	Year : Angeerasa Month : Purattasi September 1632 A.D.	Year : <del>1632</del> Month : Ayyappasi Krishna Paksham <del>1632</del> October 1676 A.D.	44-1	Srirangam
14. Srivan Satakopa Srimannarayana Yateendra Mahadesikan	Month : Adi Uturadam	Year : Nala Month : October Year : 1676 A.D.	Year : Akshaya Month : <del>Adi</del> Amavasyai August, 1686 A.D.	9-10	Tirukkandiyar
15. Srivan Satakopa Kalyana Sri Veeraraghavan Yateendra Mahadesikan	Month : Thai Chittrai	Year : Akshaya Month : Adi Poomima August, 1686 A.D.	Year : <del>1686</del> Month : Puruttasi Krishan Paksham <del>1686</del> October 1694 A.D.	6-2	Perumal Koil Kancheepuram
16. Srivan Satakopa Sri Satakopa Yateendra Mahadesikan	Month : Margazhi Mrigaseersham	Year : Bhava Month : Purattasi October 1694 A.D.	Year : Bhahudanya Moth : Vaikashi <del>1694</del> Paksham Ashtami June 1698 A.D.	3-8	Tirukkudanthal
17. Srivan Satakopa Sri Veeraraghava Vedantha Yateendra Mahadesikan	Month : Purattasi Sathayam	Year : Bahudhanya Month : Vaikashi June 1698 A.D.	Year : Pramadeeha Month : Thai Krishna Paksham January 1734 A.D.	Years - Months 35-7	Tirapput-Kuzhi
18. Srivan Satakopa Srimannarayana Yateendra Mahadesikan	Month : Purattasi Aylayam	Year : Pramadeecha Month : Thai January 1734 A.D.	Year : Rakshasa Month : Adi Krishna Paksham Ekadasi July, 1735 A.D.	1-6	Srirangam
19. Srivan Satakopa Sri Srivivesa Yateendra Mahadesikan	Month : Masi Makha	Year : Rakshasa Month : Adi July 1735 A.D.	Year : Krodhana Month : Masi Sukhla Paksham Chaturthi February, 1746 A.D.	10-7	Pullambootthankudi

20. Sri van Satakopa Sri Veeraghava Yateendra Mahadesikan	Month : Punattasi Moolam	Year : Krodhana Month : Masi February 1746 A.D.	Year : Prabhava Month : Panguni Krishna Paksham Sapthami March, 1748 A.D.	2-1	Northern Region
21. Sri van Satakopa Sri Parankusha Yateendra Mahadesikan	Month : Panguni Hashtam	Year : Prabhava Month : Panguni March, 1748 A.D.	Year : Prabhava Month : Karthigai Krishna Paksham Chaturthi November 1757 A.D.	9-8	Palamedu
22. Sri van Satakopa Sri mannanayana Yateendra Mahadesikan	Month : Adi Rohini	Year : Eeswara Month : Margazhi January 1758, A.D.	Year : Bhahudanya Month : Adi Krishna Paksham August 1758, A.D.	0-7	Palamedu
23. Sri van Satakopa Sri Veeraghava Yateendra Mahadesikan	Month : Avari Uthiradam	Year : Bahaudanya Month : Adi Krishna Paksham August 1758 A.D.	Year : Swabhanu Month : Thai Sukhla Paksham Dasami February 1764, A.D.	5-6	Srirangapuram
24. Sri van Satakopa Sri Parankusha Ramanuja Yateendra Mahadesikan	Month : Chittirai Punar Poosam	Year : Swabhanu Month : Thai February 1764, A.D.	Year : Manmatha Month : Masi Tritheeyai March 1776, A.D.	1-1	Kokkarayan Pettai
25. Sri van Satakopa Sri Srinivasa Yateendra Mahadesikan	Month : Adi Swathi	Year : Manmatha Month : Panguni March 1776, A.D.	Year : Projothpathi Month : Karthigai Pournami, Saturday, Nov. 30, 1811 A.D.	35-8	Sri Narashimhapuram

26. Srivan Satakopa Sri Ranganatha Yateendra Mahadesikan	Month : Adi Pooram	Year : Projothpathi Month : Karthigai Saturday, 21.11.1811 A.D.	Year : Sarvadhari Month : Margazhi Sukla Chaturdasi 10.12.1828	17-1	Sri Narashimhapuram
27. Srivan Satakopa Sri Veeraraghava Yateendra Mahadesikan	Month : <del>Vishakha</del> Avittam	Year : Sarvadhari Month : Margazhi 10.1.1829	Year : Kara Month : Avani Sukhala Paksham Ashtami(Wednesday) 17.8.1831 A.D.	2-7	Gadwal
28. Srivan Satakopa Sri Ranganatha Satakopa Yateendra Mahadesikan	Month : Avani Moolam	Year : Vijaya Month : Ani 7.7.1833 A.D.	Year : Durmathi Month : Margazhi Date : 3, Saturday Krishna Paksham Chaturthi, 16.12.1837	3-5	Sri Madhuranthakam
29. Srivan Satakopa Sri Parakusha Ramanuja Yateendra Mahadesikan	Month : Chittirai Chittirai	Year : Durmathi Month : Karthikai 17.11.1836	Year : Hevilambi <del>Month</del> : Margazhi Date : 3, Saturday Krishna Paksham Chaturthi, 16.12.1837	1-1	Tirupakkadal
30. Srivan Satakopa Sri Srinivasa Vedantha Yateendra Mahadesikan	Month : Margazhi Vishakam	Year : Durumukhi Month : Panguni 15.3.1837	Year : Subhakritu Month : <del>Panguni</del> <del>Month</del> : 13, Krishna Paksham Chaturthi, Tuesday, 27.9.1842	5-6	Sri Narasimhapuram
31. Srivan Satakopa Srimannarayana Vedantha Yateendra Mahadesikan	Month : Karthigai Magham	Year : Subhakritu Month : Karthigaigai	Year : Parabhava Month : Panguni Date : 19, Sukla Paksham, Tuesday 30.3.1847	4-4	Thyagarajapuram on the banks of the Kaveri



32. Srivan Satakopa Sri Veeraraghava Yateendra Mahadesikan	Month : Chittirai Star : Pooradam	Year : Prabhava Month : Purattasi Date : 21, Sukhla Paksham Chaturthi Wednesday 5.10.1847	1853 A.D. September	6-7	Tiruvalloor
33. Srivan Satakopa Sri Satakopa Yateendra Mahadesikan	Year : Purattasi Star : Visakham	Year : Pramadeecha Month : Avani 12.9.1853	Year : Pramadhi Month : Avani Date : 27, Krishna Paksham Dasmi Wednesday 10.9.1879	26-0	Tiruvalloor
34. Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Divya Paduka Sevala Srivan Satakopa Sri Satakopa Ramanuja Yateendra Mahadesikan	Year : Srimukha Month : Karthigai Star : Uthiradam November, 1813	Year : Pramadhi Month : Avani 12.9.1879	Year : Chitra Banu Month : Purattasi Date : 21, Krishna Paksham Dasami Thursday, 5.10.1882	3-1	Tiruvalloor
35. Srivan Satakopa Sri Ranganatha Yateendra Mahadesikan	Month : Karthigai Star : Kettai	Year : Chitra Banu Month : Purattasi 3.10.1882	Year : Saravadhari Month : Adi Date : 28, Friday Sukla Chaturthi Poorva Parguni Nakshatram	5-10	Tiruvalloor
36. Srivan Satakopa Sri Srinivasa Yateendra Mahadesikan	Month : Adi Star : Pushyam	Year : Saravadhari Month : Adi 13.8.1888	Year : Vilambi Month : Margazhi Date : 14, Tuesday Mrgaseersha Nakshatram 27.12.1898	10-4	Padoor
37. Srivan Satakopa Sri Veeraraghava Satakopa Yateendra Mahadesikan	Year : Krodhi Month : Masi Star : Pushyam	Year : Vilambi Month : Thai 31.1.1899	Year : Vikari Month : Margazhi Date : 2, Saturday Poomimai Asvini Nakshatram 16.12.1899	0-11	Sri Narasimhapuram

38. Sri van Satakopa Sri Srinivasa Satakopa Yateendra Mahadesikan	Year : Siddharthi Month : Thai Tiruvadhirai Sukla Dwadashi Friday January 1860	Year : Vishnavasu Month : Adi Date : 2, Poomimai Monday, Uttarada Nakshatram 17.7.1905	Year : Soumya Month : Chittirai Krishna Paksham Ashtami, Wednesday 12.5.1909	3-10	Sri Narasimhapuram
39. Sri van Satakopa Sri Parankusha Yateendra Mahadesikan	Month : Vaikashi Star : Bharani	Year : Soumya Month : Vaikashi 21.5.1909	Year : Rakshasa Month : Vaikashi Date : 7, Wednesday Sukla Saptami 20.5.1915	6-0	Sri Rajamannar Kovil
40. Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Divya Paduka Sevaka Sri van Satakopa Sri Ranganatha Satakopa Yateendra Mahadesikan	Year : Virodhikrit Month : Margazhi December 1851	Year : Pramadeecha Month : Chittirai 17.4.1913	Year : Dundubhi Month : Thai Date : 1, Krishna Paksham Trayodasi 14.1.1923	9-9	Tuvariman Agraharam near Madurai on the bank of River Vaigai
41. Sri Satakopa Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Satakopa Yateendra Mahadesikan	Year : Ananda Month : Margazhi Star : Poorattadi December 1854	Year : Dundubhi Month : Thai 17.1.1923	Details are not clearly known October 1941	18-9	Srirangam
42. Sri van Satakopa Sri Sriranga Satakopa Yateendra Mahadesikan	Year : Bahudanya Month : Thai Star L Uttaradam 21.1.1879	A) Sweekaram Year : Sukla Month : Chittirai (1929) B) Pattabhishekam Year : Visha Month : Ayppasi Date : 8, Sukla Panchami, Friday 24.10.1941	Year : Nandana Month : Masi Date : 1.3.1953 Sunday	23-10	Tiruvalloor

43. Sri Ven Satakopa Sri Veeraghava Satakopa Yateendra Mahadesikan	Year : Pinya Month : Karthigai Star : Pooradam 1901	A) Sweekaram Year : Vikrudhi Month : Thai Date : 27, Friday 9.2.1951 B) Pattabhishekam Year : Nandana Month : Masi Date : 30, Friday 13.3.1953	Year : Hevilambi Month : Karthigai Date : 9, Sunday 24.11.1957	4-10	Naimisharanyam
44. Sri Lakshmi Narasimha Divya Paduka Sevak Sri Ven Satakopa Sri Vedartha Desika Yateendra Mahadesikan	Hasta August, 1895	Sweekaram Year L Hevelambi Month : Kartikai - Sravanam Pattabhishekam Kartigai 6.12.1957	16-8-1992	34-8	Srirangam
45. Sri Ven Satakopa Sri Narayana Yateendra Mahadesikan	Akshaya Kartigai-27 Uthirattadi Sunday 13.12.1926	Sweekaram Year : Prajotpathi Month : Ippase 21.10.1991	---	---	---

(Courtesy : This compilation done by Sri D. Gopala Krishna appeared in *Nrisimha Priya*, 1992)

1. Mythological Accounts from the *Sthalapurana*

Like many other famous temples, Ahobilam also has a *Sthalapurana* which gives a detailed account of the mythological origin of the temple. Its *Sthalapurana* forms a part of the *Bramhanda Purana*, with ten chapters consisting of 1046 stanzas.<sup>1</sup> The *sthalapurana*<sup>2</sup> of Simhachalam temple discusses the four important shrines dedicated to Narasimha. These four<sup>3</sup> are *Ahobilam*, *Kritasancham*, *Harapapam* and *Simhachalam*. This recounts how Narasimha, the God of Ahobilam, manifested Himself born from a pillar to kill the demon, Hiranyakasipu.<sup>4</sup> The *Kurma Purana* gives an account of Vishnu tearing Hiranyakasipu to pieces. "The circumstances in which Vishnu had to assume the furious form of the man-lion" are not mentioned in this *Purana*.

An account given in the *Padmapurana* is in agreement with what is found in the *Vishnu Purana* and some other *puranas* also. It tells us that "Hiranyakasipu had in his earlier life adored Brahma and obtained from Him boons to the effect that he should be so invulnerable as not to be killed by man or beast, that he should not die either in the day or at night, and that no weapon of any kind should injure him. After he obtained these boons, he naturally became haughty and irrepressible in his worrying behaviour towards the Gods, and it became imperative that he should be killed. But at the same time the boon conferred by Brahma on him had to be respected. Consequently, Vishnu assumed the form of a man-lion, and tore Hiranyakasipu with the claws at the time of lingering twilight forming the junction between day and night, himself being seated upon the doorsill of the mansion of Hiranyakasipu. It is obvious that, in so causing the death of the demon, not one of the boons bestowed on him by Brahma was counteracted and shown to be futile". The mythological account of the place Ahobilam and its importance as narrated in the *Sthalapurana* runs as follows. This sacred place was the kingdom of Hiranyakasipu in the *Krtayuga* and Lord Narasimha came out of a pillar from the palace of the demon. This place is variously known as *Vedachalam*, *Garudachalam* and *Virakshetram*. It is also known as *Singvelkunram*. Tirumangai Alvar, a famous Vaishnavite saint, praised this Lord as "except the Lord nobody can enter this Narasimhakshetra. This place, which is Ahobilam has two popular legends, for the derivation of the word "Ahobilam". It is stated that the devas (Gods), while witnessing the terrible aspect (*Ugra Kala*) he took on in order to tear to pieces Hiranyakaspu, sang in His praise as "Ahobala" (Lo! the stupendous strength). Hence this place has come to be known as Ahobalam". The Gods praised Lord Narasimha exclaiming at his strength.

The other version is that because of the great cave, it is named Ahobila. There Garuda worshipped the Lord of Ahobila. Besides Brahma; Lord Sri Rama and Lord Srinivasa, the most popular

deity of Tirumala-Tirupathi, also worshipped Lord Narasimha. The Lord of Ahobila Narasimha is referred to as "Peria Perumal" (God of gods) in Srivaishnava tradition. It is stated that when Sri Rama was in the forest, we know from *Seshadharma* that he prayed to the Lord of Sri Ahobila with *Panchamrta stotra*. In *Archavatara*, Lord Srinivasa had married Padmavathi, only after offering worship to Sri Narasimha of this mountain. It is held that the Shrine of Lord Srinivasa, to the south of Narasimha's temple within the enclosure, lends credence to the view.

The *Sthalapurana* of Ahobilam also gives an account of the nine forms of Narasimha worshipped here. In short, the *Sthalapurana* of the temple, which is said to be *Bramhanda Puranatargata* (part of Brahmanda Purana) with ten chapters, described the greatness of the *Kshetra* in the first chapter. The second chapter of the Purana narrates the performance of the penance of Garuda for the *darshana* of the Lord. The third chapter gives an account of the sacred ponds of the place. The fourth chapter furnishes an account of the Nine temples of Narasimha in his nine forms and performance of the penances by *Bramha*, *Bharadvaja*, *Gobhila* and *Bhargava Rama*. The fifth chapter relates the traditional story of *Jaya* and *Vijaya* and their birth as *Hiranyaksha* and *Hiranyakasipu* respectively and the assurance given by the Lord to the gods for their protection. The sixth chapter describes, at length, the childhood of *Prahlada* and the atrocities perpetrated against him by his father. The seventh chapter narrates the devotion of *Prahlada* to the Lord, birth of God Narasimha and the destruction of the demon, *Hiranyakasipu*. The eighth chapter mentions the *Sarabhavatara* of Siva and his destruction by Lord Narasimha. The ninth chapter states explicitly the untiring efforts of *Bairava* for the river *Bhavanasini* and his becoming *Kshetrapala* of the place. The last chapter clearly states that worship to the idol of the Lord is the only means for attaining salvation to the common people.

## 2. Traditional accounts depicted in Ahobilam Kaifiyat

The *Ahobilam Kaifiyat*<sup>5</sup> (28th July, 1810) forming part of Mackenzie collections gives very valuable information regarding the Ahobilam temples. The *Ahobilam Kaifiyat* gives the legendary account substantiating the name of Ahobilam. "In the cosmic expanse and in the fourteen worlds is the earth; this and in the 'abhinava jambu dweepa' and to the south of the area of the mount *Meru* and near Sri Sailam, the Southern Varanasi, a part of Karnataka country is to be found the Nallamala mountain range. On one of these mountains, eight *amadas* from *Srisaila Kshetra*, *Garuda* commenced silent penance to obtain a vision of Lord Narasimha who destroyed *Hiranyakasipu*. The Lord, in His grace, after long years of the penance of *Garuda*, manifested Himself in the cave of a mountain".

"Ten *Parvats* to the north-east of the mountain where *Garuda* was doing penance, a vision of His manifestation was then granted to *Garuda*, who after obtaining a sign of the location of the mountain cave, gladly travelled thither and saw the embodiment of the *Satswaroop*."

*Mahapurusha*, Lord *Jwalanarasimha* is not easily accessible to common people. *Garuda* then worshipped the Lord and praised Him that '*Ahobilam is mahabalam*' (Ahobilam is a great sustainer with great strength). The Lord's *Divya mangala vighraha* was worshipped by *Garuda* with several *stotras*. *Garuda* then considered himself as blessed after a vision of the Lord. This divine place thereafter obtained the deserving name of Ahobilam".

"The mountain on which *Garuda* performed *tapas* became famous as *Garudachala*. In the days of yore when truth and *dharma* prevailed, great heat was observable in the mountain-cave of Ahobila. According to legend when green grass was put in the cave, it caught fire and smoke emitted. Several great *rishis* lived there for a time. After sometime, with the knowledge that great places would become common *janapadas* in the *Kali* age, they left for the northern lands, covering up the



a *Kalyana mandapa* with twenty eight pillars, rich in architecture.<sup>11</sup> According to the tradition, Chaitanya (Gauranga) visited Narasimha at Ahobilam in 1513 A.D.<sup>12</sup>

#### 4. Chenchu Parinaya in folklore

There are a number of popular legends about Narasimha, which are widely current among the Chenchus, who are closely associated with Ahobilam. The popular legend is that "when Lord Vishnu took on the incarnation of Narasimha, the Golden Lakshmi was born in the Chenchu tribe and both were living very happily. On account of this, the Lord is said to have refused to go back to *Vaikuntam*.<sup>13</sup> The love-making of Lord Narasimha with Chenchita, a tribal girl, is famous in many folk songs of the place.<sup>14</sup> The sculptures of Narasimha and Chenchita on the pillars of the temples of Upper and Lower Ahobilam and *Vasantika Parinayam*,<sup>15</sup> a Sanskrit drama, written by *Jiyar*, the seventh pontiff of Ahobila math, describing the marriage of the Lord Narasimha with Chenchita, lend support to the popular legend.

There are several folk songs on the lips of many people of this region. These folk songs are more imaginative than historical and add various episodes to the story of Chenchita. These depict the love episode between Narasimha and Chenchita. A few popular songs are appended at the end of the chapter.

The mythology and legends are more the creations of fertile minds for the satisfaction of the curious interested in the common human desire to know about the antecedents of anything. They also served as the means of enhancing the popularity and glory of the institution concerned. They hardly stand the test of historical scrutiny, though sometimes some legends may have been woven round a grain of fact.

#### 5. Historical Account

##### A. Nature of sources and the scope of the present account

In the context of the reconstruction of the history of Ahobilam and its temples, the authentic historical sources like epigraphs are very few. First of all there is no foundation inscription relating to these temples. So it becomes necessary to take recourse to various other sources also, like the legends, but they must be subjected to the scrutiny of the historical eye. Fortunately, connected with the legends of this temple and amenable to verification are a few historical personalities about whom a lot of material is available in other sources.

Thus, in the present section, we aim mainly to have a glimpse of the origin and growth of this temple, by way of assessing the historicity of traditional accounts and reviewing the epigraphical data.

##### i. The beginning

It is a matter of disappointment that the temple and its surroundings at Ahobilam are absolutely devoid of any inscription of the early period. The earliest epigraphical record now we find here is of the mid-14th Century A.D. in the period of the Reddy monarchs. Obviously one has to believe in some intentional destruction<sup>16</sup> of the old epigraphs and for that even of the structures, took place probably in the course of frequent renovation works, as we notice usually in the case of similar religious centres. The greater the religious importance of the place, the more extensive would be the loss of antiquarian evidence of the structural and epigraphical nature. Only some icons may survive, if the renovator does not strike them out of reverential fear in breaking the idols. As a clear indicator of the loss of all previous records, the copper plate grant of Anavema Reddy dated to 1378

A D issued from Pedda Palakalur, which is 10 kms from Guntur, states that he has constructed flights of steps both to Srisailem and Ahobilam for the benefit of the pilgrims. This clearly indicates, at that time, Ahobilam was a prominent pilgrim centre visited by several pilgrims.

Assessing the extent of influence of Ahobilam on the other parts of the state, helps us to fix the upper limit to the place. An inscription<sup>17</sup> of Chalukya Kirthivarman II, found at Peddapeta, a hamlet of Yadiki, refers to the name of a person as *Vobula*. The word *Vobula* is a colloquial form of Ahobilam.

Also, the Tamil saint, Tirumangai Alvar, who lived in the 8th Century A D, composed Tamil poems in praise of the God of Ahobilam (See Chapter-1 for details).

Another very interesting fact which attests the existence of Narasimha sculpture in this region as early as the 6th Century A D, is Peddamudiam, a place which is situated nineteen kms, north of Ahobilam.

The chief interest attaching to the place lies in the fact that it seems to have been the place of birth of Vishnu-Vardhana, who founded the Chalukyan Empire. It was variously known as Trilochanapura, Brahmana Mudiam and Mudiam. There are two temples dedicated to Narasimha on the outskirts of the village. One temple of Ugra (Vidarana) Narasimha Svami is on the bank of the river Kunderu and the other is devoted to Yogananda Narasimha Svami at a distance of two furlongs to the east of the above temple. It is said that the former is earlier than the latter.

There are four inscriptions which give information about the temple of Narasimha. It appears that the temple, on the bank of the river, was surrounded by the houses, which are now in ruins. The history of the antiquity of the cult of Narasimha of this place, can be gleaned from a stone plaque, which is found at this place. In it, there is a representation of nine deities, including Narasimha, which is third in order from the left and it belongs to the fifth or sixth centuries A D, at the latest. Sivaramamurti states that this sculpture belongs to the 6th century A D.

"On the slopes of a hill two miles from Piduguralla in the Palnadu taluk of Guntur district, the State department of Archaeology excavated and brought to light a lime-stone plaque bearing representations of the early icons. This plaque was originally installed inside a rectangular bench which was unfortunately lifted for building materials by the neighbouring villagers. No plan of the temple was made by the explorers but a graphic description was made available by the former Director of Archaeology, Sri Abdul Waheed Khan<sup>18</sup> and the plaque<sup>19</sup> having Narasimha figure is dated to 3rd-4th Century A D.

Further, at Ahobilam, we find cave shrines which are either cut in or cut out of boulders on hillocks [See Jwala, Pavana, Ahobilam and Bairava mandapas]. We have many evidences<sup>20</sup> which show that the Brahminical cave temples sprang up under the patronage of Vishnukundins, Eastern Chalukyas, Pallavas of Kanchi and Telugu Cholas, in the regions of the Deccan plateau. Historians<sup>21</sup> also opine that the cave temples in this region might have been built as early as in the 2nd or 3rd Century A D.

Thus possibly the Ahobilam caves may be placed between the 3rd and 4th Centuries A D. The exact date within this short span is not easy to establish.

We may also note here that the icon of the Upper Ahobilam appears to be earlier than the Peddamudiam sculptures (For details see Chapter 6). Also, there are a number of Narasimha icons at Ahobilam, the delineation of the figures, drapery and ornamentation, are typical of the Chalukyan school of art.



## 6. Further development of Ahobilam under different rulers

Traditional accounts also connect the history of the temple with Pratapa Rudra Mahadeva of the Kakatiyas. While there is no epigraphical basis to this traditional account, the presence of the early Kakatiya influence on the pillars of the Mahamandapa of the Upper Ahobilam temple gives support to the traditional account of the connection of the temple with Kakatiyas. The *Ahobilam Kaifiyat* also mentions that one Nandana Chakravarti - in the lineage of Parikshit, Janamejaya, Satanika, Aswamedat, Mahakshemendra, Rajanarendra, Somendra and Uttangabhuja. Uttangabhuja, being the father of Nandana Chakravarti was the king in whose reign, worship of Ahobila Narasimha Svami was being performed regularly. Similarly such worship is mentioned during the time of the Chalukya kings Jagadeka Malla, Bhuvaneka Malla and Tribhuvana Malla rajas. The *Kaifiyat* also mentions that worship was also going on during Ganapati's reign; and thereafter in the reign of Pratapa Rudra Deva Maharaja of Warangal. The reference is obviously to Kakatiya kings of Warangal. The *Ahobilam Kaifiyat* mentions that the *Utsava Vighrahas* of Ahobilasvami got moulded and made by Pratapa Rudra Mahadeva. It also mentions that local people say that he did the work for the temples and mandapas of Ahobilam.

Ahobilam played an important role in shaping the course and destiny of the Vijayanagara Empire. The Lord of Ahobilam is believed to have saved the Empire on two crucial occasions. Sri Adi Van Satagopa Yatheendra Mahadesikan, the first *Jiyar* of Ahobila Math, made Ahobilam the centre of his activities. He rallied a large number of Maths to popularise the works of Ramanuja and Vedanta Desika. According to the Ahobilam inscriptions of 1584-85, the God of Ahobilam Himself bestowed the robes of a Sanyasin on Van Satagopa *Jiyar*. He declared himself to be the servant of Sri Lakshmi Narasimha of Ahobilam and carried the idol of Malola Narasimha throughout the country for propagating Vaishnavism. He was essentially good and extended lots of privileges to all sections of society in the temples and instituted a class of missionaries for the benefit of the hill tribes. His Holiness had a lot of influence on Devaraya II who ruled the Empire from 1422 to 1446.

The sixth *Jiyar* of the Ahobila Math, Sri Parankusa Yatheendra Mahadesikan, was highly respected by Mukunda Harichandam, an independent sovereign of Orissa. The king was an ally of Rama Raya of Vijayanagara. The *Jiyar* Svami instituted worship of the *Alvars* at Purushotham (Puri) where the presiding deity is called *Jagannath*.

Sometime during the 14th century, the Vijayanagara Empire was declining in importance but by the grace of the Lord of Ahobilam, the kingdom was resurrected through Saluva Narasimha. Saluva Mangu, who restored the idol of the temple of Srirangam, had a son called Gautha who was then ruling Chandragiri. Gautha's son Gunda had a wife called Mallambika. They did not have any children for a long time. To get their desire fulfilled, they had observed to a number of vows and finally retired to Ahobilam for performing penance. Pleased with their penance, Lord Narasimha appeared to the king in a dream and blessed him with a son possessing of all virtues and ordained that he should rule the Empire. The king, later, narrated this to his wife. The king was blessed with a son whom they named Narasimha after the God of Ahobilam. In due course, Saluva Narasimha proved to be a very great king of the Vijayanagara Empire and protected the Hindu culture and *dharma* from the onslaughts of the neighbouring Muslim kingdoms. He infused rare vigour into the body politic in rescuing the state from destruction. The birth of Salva Narasimha is considered to be an expression of Divine Will. It is interesting to note that the Divine Will expressed itself at a very crucial time in the history of Vijayanagara.

From the time of Saluva Narasimha onwards, the rulers of Vijayanagara were very much devoted to Lord Narasimha of Ahobilam. One of the rulers of Vijayanagara called himself Ahobila Raja. He built a Gopuram and a Mandapam for the Vittalasvami temple at Hampi. In 1338 A.D. foot steps

to the Upper Ahobilam ■■■■ built by ■ king of Vijayanagara. In 1515, Sri Krishnadevaraya, visited Ahobilam. By about this period, the Bahamani Sultans could ■■■ tolerate the only Hindu Kingdom flourishing in the South and they joined together in 1565 ■ Tallikota and ■■■ the forces of Sadasivaraya of Vijayanagara. The defeat of the forces of the Vijayanagara Empire threatened to put the future generations of the Hindus of the South in dismay. Tirumala, who succeeded Sadasivaraya, re-organised the shattered kingdom and shifted the capital from Vijayanagara to Penukonda. Time and again, the Muslim forces were attacking the territories of the Vijayanagara Empire ■■■ harassing the people. Ranga Raya I, who succeeded Tirumala, also ■■■ not able ■ stop this. In the year 1579 A.D., the forces of Ibrahim Ali Kutub Shah, the Sultan of Golkonda, attacked Ahobilam, completely demolished the temple structures and plundered the jewel-studded idols of Lord Lakshmi Narasimha and carried it to Golkonda. This was a sequel to the Tallikota war in which Rama Raya had been killed. The Sultan's son Kuli Kutub Shah too had ■ hand in the further destruction of ■■■ Ahobilam temples. The idols ■■■ brought into the presence of the Sultan by one Murahari Rao. When the idol of Narasimha which ■■■ made of gold and silver and studded with precious rubies was shown to him along with the other treasures looted ■ Ahobilam, the Sultan ■■■ perplexed and stunned. He could not speak from that moment onwards and that night, he vomitted blood and died. According to some, the exact circumstances in which Ibrahim Kutub Shah, second in succession to Kuli Kutub Shah died, remained mysterious. Farista, a contemporary historian, states that it was rumoured in the Golkonda Fort by the Muslims that the Hindu demons of the Ahobilam temple had killed the Sultan while the Hindus said that the death of the Sultan ■■■ brought about by the wrath of Lord Narasimha of Ahobilam. One indisputable fact is that the Sultan died suddenly and as Sherwani has put it, ■ per the available historical evidence, Ibrahim Kutub Shah had spent seven years of his life in the Vijayanagara Empire, before he became the Sultan and he ■■■ very well aware how the Vijayanagar kings were devoted and attached to the God of Ahobilam. He must have seen the magnificent stone idol of Lakshminarasimha at Hampi and must have been bewitched by its captivating beauty and power. Although the Sultan had participated in the Tallikota war, he was not directly responsible for the sacking of Ahobilam. The sacking must have taken place without his sanction. With this background of the Sultan, it is not, therefore, surprising to believe that the sight of the looted holy idol of Lord Narasimha shocked the Sultan and caused haemorrhage in him. This appraisal is perhaps relevant and significant after with this event, the attitude of the subsequent rulers of Golkonda underwent a remarkable change towards the Hindus, the Hindu Temples and the Hindu culture.

The Sultan died on the 5th June, 1580 and the reign of Golkonda was taken over by his ■■■ Kuli Kutub Shah. As stated earlier, Kuli Kutub Shah had led the attack on Ahobilam. He had also witnessed the tragic death of his father and must have pondered ■■■ the mysterious circumstances of his death. It is no wonder, therefore, that he had to adopt a softer policy towards Hindusim. He gave some of the important posts to the Hindus and this policy was continued by the subsequent rulers of the dynasty. In fact, the last Sultan of Golkonda, namely, Abul Hassan Tanisha, extended royal patronate to the temple of Lord Rama at Bhadrachalam. This policy, however, provoked the wrath of the Moghul Emperor Aurangazeb.

It may be further interesting to note that even after Kuli Kutub Shah took over the reign for a period of five years, *poojas* ■■■ not performed in ■■■ temples of Ahobilam. Vijayanagara, which was a mighty Empire earlier, was then declining. As history would reveal it, we find ■ strange pattern emerging at that juncture. Once again it was Ahobilam which gave strength to ■■ fallen Empire. His Holiness Sri Van Satagopa Sri Satagopa Yatheendra Mahadesikan, the seventh *Jiyar* of Ahobila Mutt, visited the court of Ranga Raya of Vijayanagara ■■■ requested him ■■■ ■■■ original glory of Ahobilam. Ranga Raya pleaded his helplessness in view of ■■ powerful position ■■■ by the Sultan of Golkonda. ■■■ the *Jiyar's* words were quite purposive and persuasive. He reminded the king of the

age-old connections of the Vijayanagara dynasty with the Ahobilam temple. The temple's financial position was in a bad shape ■ it had lost its lands to the enemies. The *Jiyar*, therefore, pointed out that it was the duty of the king to restore these lands to the temple. The *Jiyar* wanted him ■ give up the policy of appeasement and drive out the aggressors just as his illustrious predecessors like Saluva Narasimha had done. As a result of this, Ranga Raya was very much inspired and he offered himself to lead an army into the then Ahobilam district and drive out the enemy. The High Priest said that there ■■■ necessity for his direct intervention. It was enough if he entrusted it to his subordinates Kondaraju Venkataraju and Kondaraju Tirumala Raju. The God of Ahobilam appeared to the *Jiyar* in ■ dream and mentioned that these two warriors were the fittest persons for the purpose. The king acquiesced in Divine will and he presented the two chiefs with jewels and titles and asked them to march against the enemy.

Sri Van Satagopa *Jiyar* led these military leaders of the Vijayanagara Empire along with their troops and directed them how to attack the enemies and also gave instructions regarding the field placements. The Golkonda forces were routed by the forces of Vijayanagara Empire ■ Ahobilam and the temple area was cleared of the enemies. It was said at that time that the army of Kuli Kutub Shah ■■■ captured. An inscription at the Ahobilam temple dated 1584 A.D.<sup>22</sup> bears testimony to this event.

An account of the war described already would reveal the great historic role played by Ahobilam in resurrecting Hinduism and in the maintenance of the glory of the Vijayanagara Empire.

## 7. Munro and Ahobilam

There is also a mention that the English Collector (actually a Scotsman) Col. Munro arranged for ■ annual payment of 100 varahas from Rudravaram village in the East India Company Taluq to be paid to Ahobilam temple.

Alafa Khan, ■■■ of Munawar Khan, it is said was appropriating the Hundi collections and the kanukas offered to the Lord both at the Upper Ahobilam and the Lower Ahobilam. The *Kaifiyat* also mentions that there was no one (in 1810 A.D.) to support the temples, and that only the *Garbhagudi* and *Prakaram* of the temple were in good condition whereas the mandapas and gopuras ■■■ in ruins. The *Kaifiyat* also mentions that Sri Parankusa Sriman Satagopa Jiyangar of Ahobila Math who was the then Guru of the Pitham was staying at Kumbakonam and that *Pancharatra* pujas were being performed in Ahobilam then. The absence of the Jiyangar in Ahobilam is also mentioned. In 1810, the Upper Ahobilam temple had one *pujari* and two *sudras*, and these were staying there on festival days only. There were *pujari* brahmin houses and ten huts of *sudras* in the Lower Ahobilam. Worship was being offered to Sri Narasimhasvami in the Upper Ahobilam and also for the Chinna Ahobila Narasimhasvami. The festivals for the Svami at both the places were being performed from the 15th day of *Suddha Phalguna* month upto the 12th day of *Bahula* fortnight.

The Ahobilam temple continues to be under the *Jiyars* of the Ahobila Math even to-date. The Endowments' Department of the Government of Andhra Pradesh has not yet taken over the temple. In the year 1963, a Renovation Committee of several members ■■■ formed with Dr.N. Sanjeeva Reddy as its Chairman. Renovation work ■■■ then started. The Tirumala-Tirupathi Devasthanams also released funds for constructing ■ choultry at Ahobilam. Several works ■■■ then taken up for the renovation of the temple. The Upper Ahobilam Rajagopura Vimanam ■■■ Maha Samprokshanam, after the renovation ■ Friday, the 20th June, 1978. However, there is need for more renovation work, better transport, lodging and boarding facilities to be provided by the Endowments Department and the Temple authorities.

The works taken up and completed by the Renovation committee ■ far are :

#### **A. Lower Ahobilam**

- (i) Debris removal around the temple.
- (ii) Renovation of three *Prakaram* walls in the main temple.
- (iii) Cut stone flooring inside the main temple.
- (iv) Black topping of the Main Street (*sannidhi* Street) from Allagadda Road ■ *Mondi Gopuram*.
- (v) Cut stone flooring around *Dhvajastambham* area in front of *Rajagopuram*.
- (vi) Renovation of the *Vimana* of Sri Venkateswara Svami.
- (vii) Renovation of Sri Adivan Satakopa Svami *Sannidhi*.
- (viii) Renovation of "Putta Bangam" - *Mandapas*.
- (ix) Renovation of the *Ranga Mandapas* flooring (with 5 line dressing)

#### **B. Upper Ahobilam**

- (i) Renovation of the *Koluvu Mandapa* along with the provision of *Vimana*.
- (ii) Renovation of the flight of steps with the parapet wall.
- (iii) Concrete road from the *Koluvu Mandapa* to the *Rajagopura*.
- (iv) Renovation of flooring inside the temple with cut stones.
- (v) Renovation of the Western and the Eastern *Rajagopurams*.
- (vi) Renovation of Sri Svami *Vari Vimana*.
- (vii) Construction of Sri *Ammavari Shrine* with a ■■■ *Vimana*.
- (viii) Renovation of the *Kalyana Mandapa*.
- (ix) Renovation of *Garuthman*.
- (x) Providing all the main *mandapas* with ornamental grills.
- (xi) Renovation of the *Gadwal Mandapas*.
- (xii) Retaining wall from the Western *Rajagopuram* to the *Koluvu Mandapa* in the West on the Northern side of the concrete Road.
- (xiii) Renovation of the Upper Ahobilam *Sannidhi Pushkarani* near *Bhairava gundam* and its surrounding *mandapas* ■■ under execution.

#### **C. Other works executed**

- (xiv) At a cost of Rs. Fifty-six thousands the *Bhargava Temple* and the steps leading to ■■ temple were renovated by Sri N.D. Bangur, Calcutta.
- (xv) Sri Raghava Reddy, Proddatur provided two grill doors to Sri Chathravata Svami.
- (xvi) Renovation of ■■ temple kitchen ■■ the Upper Ahobilam. (xvii) Renovation of temple ■■■■ at the Lower Ahobilam.
- (xviii) Weather proof course ■■ ■■ Upper Ahobilam.
- (xix) Water supply scheme at the Lower Ahobilam by providing Jet pump ■■ over-head tank. This is wholly donated by Sri Sanda Venugopal of U.S.A. S/O Sri Sanda ■■■■ Rayudu, P.A. to Collector, Cuddapah (retd.).

## FOLK SONGS

1. నీలావర్ణము లెయవో నిజమూర్తి లెయవో  
 నిజదాసులొద్దారు నిడరా పాలించు  
 మేలుకో ఓ ఓటులేసా  
 పాలావర్ణము లెయవో - పరమాత్మ లెయవో  
 పరదాసులొద్దినారు - పడకసాలించూ      "మేలుకో"  
 నందికొండల నుంచి - పెన్నెటి గంగా  
 ఉదిరిపించులతోనే - ఉదకాలు తెచ్చే      "మేలుకో"  
 నీగాలి గోపాలు - నీరెండలేగాసె  
 దేపాలగోపాము - పాలెండలేగాసె      "మేలుకో"  
 తిమ్మపు - తిరుమాల అంపె  
 గోయిందరాజులు - గొడుగంపినదే      "మేలుకో"  
 కదిరీ నరసంహులు - కచ్చూరి అంపె  
 గడికోన అంజనేలు - గంధోడి బంపె      "మేలుకో"  
 పెన్నోబలము నుండి - పెన్నా బలేనుడు  
 పెనుమాల అంపెను - పరగ పేగమె      "మేలుకో"  
 సెంచు మాలచ్చిమి - సీరిగంధ మిచ్చూ  
 ఆదిమాలచ్చిమి - ఆరతులిచ్చూ      "మేలుకో"  
 2. మానురో కొండాల రెడ్డి మామిడి పూవంటి దేహం  
 నాయముంటే నచేసుకోరాదా కొండాలరెడ్డి  
 సాయమివరీ పాలు జేతురా      "మానురో"  
 ఇంతలింతలు సేరగట్టి - ఈతసేక్ల రయిక తొడిగి  
 పొద్దుమైన సొద సేలోని కొండాలరెడ్డి  
 దోసనెయకు మోసుబోతిరా      "మానురో"  
 ఓటులేసుని కోనలోన వంగి గడ్డి కోయబోతే  
 వగలమారి ఓటులేకుడే కొండాలరెడ్డి  
 వంగదోసెర మంగ పొదలోకి      "మానురో"  
 3. నరసింహ : పెళ్ళాడు పెళ్ళాడు సెంచోలెపిల్ల  
 ఓటుళము పోదమే ఓ భామా  
 చెంచులక్ష్మి : నల్లంగ ఉండాపు      ఓటుళో  
 నీకు నామాలు గలవయ్య      " "  
 అయ్యనల్లంగ వుండాపు      " "  
 నీకు నామాలు గలవయ్య      " "

		నిన్ను జూచేనాకు ఓబుళో అబ్బ వాసనా వద్దాది నాసామి	
		అబ్బ యూడుగాదూ పోర అరెణోడుగాదువోర	ఓబుళో ..
		అమ్మ మూతెల్ల నరిసింది నువ్వుముసిలోని గుండావు	.. ..
		నాసావసగాళ్లంత ఓబుళూ నన్ను ఎగతాళి చేయరో ఓసామి	
నరసింహ	:	భామ <b>పాద</b> పురుషుడ్ని నా అవతారమే చూడు అవతార పురుషుడ్ని సెంచోల్ల పిల్లా యాదినారాయుడే ఓ భామ	ఓ భామ ..
		ఒడ్దికలా పెళ్లారు నీకు వైకుంఠమమరునే కూడికతో పెండ్లారు కొడుకన్న పుడతాడే <b>పాద</b> ఉక్కు స్తంభము కాడ ఉయ్యాల గడదామె	ఓ భామా == .. .. .. ..
చెంచులక్ష్మి	:	<b>పాద</b> పెళ్లి పెళ్లంతావు నన్నుబో బాధపెడతావు బోయింప వెడతావు ఆడదాని ముగమూను నువ్వు సూసింటివా లేదా	ఓబుళో .. .. .. ..
నరసింహ	:	అదిలచ్చిమి దేవి పెళ్ళాడి ఉంటిని భామ అదిలచ్చిమిదేవి వనమెల్లి పోయినాది అలివుంటే నాకు సెంచోల్లపిల్లా అడగనూ వచ్చునా ఓ భామా	ఓ భామ .. .. .. ..
చెంచులక్ష్మి	:	అయ్య పెళ్లి పెళ్లంతావు నా పైటెల్లు యిడవయ్య నామాలు గలవయ్య నువ్వు దాసరిగుండావు	ఓబుళో == == ..
నరసింహ	:	దాసరి అనబాకు నీకు దండములు చేసెను	ఓ భామ ..

పురుషుడై సెంచోల్లపిల్ల  
యాదినారాయుడై ఓ భామ

చెంచులక్ష్మి	:	అయ్య బానకడుపూవాడ అబ్బ దొప్పి సెవుల వాడ అరెరె నిన్ను చూచే నాక అబ్బ వాసనా వచ్చాది నాసా వాసగాళ్లంత ఓబుళో అబ్బ ఎగతాళి జేయరే ఓబుళో	ఓబుళో .. .. ..
నరసింహ	:	నీసావాస గాళ్లంతా ఈడు బాగుండాది జోడుబాగుండాది యిద్దరికి అయితేను బోగ పెండ్లయిన జేతురే	ఓ భామ .. .. ..
చెంచులక్ష్మి	:	అబ్బ పెళ్ళి పెళ్లంటావు నీకు పామన్న కరవరా నువు బోయే దారిలోన నాగుపామన్న కరవదా	ఓబుళో .. .. ..
నరసింహ	:	భామ పాము పామంటావు భామ పామెక్కడున్నాది భామ నాగుపాముల బట్టి నీకు నడుమూకు దాబులా భామ పసిరిక పాములే నీకు సేతల్ల గాజులే	ఓ భామా .. .. .. .. ..
జనం	:	అయ్య సూర్య చంద్రులనింక అయ్య అనలె బెట్టిండు అయ్య భూదేవినింక భలె సాక్ష్యంబు బెట్టిండు అయ్య తంగెదాకులు రెండు తాళులెణిసిండు బందెరాకులు రెండు భలె భాస్కూలు చేసిండు బందెరాకుల తోన ఓబుళో బాసికాలు కట్టెనే ఓబుళో	ఓబుళో .. .. .. .. .. .. ..

### 1. A Description Of The Temple Complex

The Ugra-Narasimha temple at the Upper Ahobilam and the Prahladavarada Narasimha temple at the Lower Ahobilam are the most important and magnificent structures in the whole of Ahobilam<sup>1</sup>.

#### A. Ugra-Narasimha temple at Upper Ahobilam

The Upper Ahobilam temple is situated at a distance of 8 kms from the Lower Ahobilam temple. The road leading to Upper Ahobilam winds its way through the dense forests and the Forest Department has laid an excellent road<sup>2</sup> upto the temple. The mountains on both sides tower up straight high into the sky and between them stretches the narrow valley with luxuriant verdure of trees. Along one edge of this valley, like a glossy serpent carelessly creeping on, glides the sacred *Bhavanasini* with its holy crystal water hissing against the boulders. As we pass along this valley, a modest gateway welcomes us. Entering it, we find ourselves in an enclosure with *mandapas* all around. Probably, this might have housed the Ahobilam math once. Further proceeding on keeping to the mountain side, we reach the *Sannidhikoneru*. From the *Koneru* as we proceed still further, we find a group of scattered *Mandapas* and *Bairavagundam*. Entering the main gate (*Rajagopuram*), we come to the main complex of the Ugra Narasimha temple.

#### B. General Layout of the temple

The temple proper is rectangular in plan (measuring 201' x 101'.9") and faces east, but whereas the *Garbhagriha* faces north, because of the orientation and situation of the natural cave. In general, it consists of a main control unit with a *garbhagriha* (in this case a natural cave), on its either side studded with small shrines, and preceded by a *mahamandapa* and a pillared *mukhamandapa*, all axially aligned east-west, except *garbhagriha*. In the same axial line, abutting the *mukhamandapa* is a *dhvajastambha* (21'10") with a *balipitha* (6'7") in its front. This unit is located in a large open area, with cloistered *mandapas* on all the sides, and the eastern gateway leads to the Malola and Jwala shrines.

#### C. The Main Unit

##### 1. Garbhagriha

This forms the original cave of the temple. This is a natural cave, with no definite shape, the Western Wall of the cave is the continuation of the mountain *Garudadri*, measuring 9'7" x 16' x 5'9"



and with north - south orientation. The main deity is placed, on a raised platform, approximately 4' high and the idol (2' high) faces east.

The door frame of the *garbhagriha* is very crude and short. There appear no decorative details, except the *vaishnava Dvarapalakas* at the base of the door jambs. On either side of the door jamb is a life size *dvarapalaka* figure measuring 8'6", now kept standing against the front wall of the *Garbhagriha*, but these were part of the original. They might have been added during the later periods.

In its external elevation, the *garbhagriha* is a plain cave on the eastern and the western sides. The southern side is not at all visible and in the northern side, the only visible wall has an *adhistana* supporting a plain *bhitti*. The concrete roof over the cave is a recent construction. The *garbhagriha* is crowned by a tower.

The *Adhistana* consists of a series of functional mouldings. *Upana*, the lowermost moulding, projects beyond the vertical norm and is surmounted by the *Jagati*. Over this is the *Kumba*, which is three-faceted (*tripatta-kumuda*). Next is the *Kantha*, a recessed moulding, oblong in elevation, and connecting the other mouldings above. The *Pattika*, which is above the *Kantha* is thick. The topmost members of the plinth is *Vedi* (also called *Prati*).

The *Pranala* to drain out water from the *garbhagriha* is visible on the western side at the *vedi* level. This projects out of the wall for about 1'8" and has a lion's face at the end.

Above the roof, the *trula sikhara* part of the superstructure is visible. This *sikhara*, however, is of brick and cement and is obviously of recent times.

## ii. Side-Shrines

To the left of the *Ahobila-Narasimha* (to the east) is a smaller (4'8" high), in which few idols are kept. They are the idols of Shiva linga, Ganesh, Sri Devi and Lakshmi Devi. The significant of all the assemblage of the idols is the idol of Lakshmi Narasimha tearing the demon Hiranyakasipu.

There is a small rectangular shrine measuring 6'x6'10", for the goddess, Chenchulakshmi. The shrine is to the right of the main shrine, situated on the Western side of the main unit.

It is worth noting that there is another small shrine beside the cave of *Ahobila Narasimha*. Actually one has to climb up a height of 6' to the west of the main shrine to this small shrine, where the *Sudarshana Yantra* is installed. The shrine of Chenchulakshmi is further to the west of the *Sudarshana yantra*.

According to the earlier plan, (old plan of 1916) we find another room (now not to be seen), by the side of the goddess's shrine. It appears that a huge number of copperplate records were placed in this room along with the temple jewels and ornaments.

## iii. Mahamandapa

Axially in front of the *Garbhagriha* is a pillared Mahamandapa. The Mahamandapa is to the north of the main shrine and has sixteen pillars. On the floor space, in the centre of the Mahamandapa, is a circular piece of black granite, called *Brahmagundam*<sup>3</sup>. There are three entrances to the mahamandapa. The central entry is regularly used and the other two are permanently closed. In external elevation, the Mahamandapa has an *adhistana* supporting a *bhitti*. The *kapota*, *prastara* and *hara* portions are now embedded in a concrete roof recently constructed.

The *Adhistana* consists of a series of functional mouldings, *upana*, *jagati*, *patta*, *urdhva padma*, *kantha*, *kampa*, *tripattikumuda* and another broad *patta* with rectangular blocks having

sculptural motifs. The wall is decorated with niches and pilasters. There is a *bhadra-koshia* in the centre with *Karnastambha* at each end and two *kudyastambhas* on either side of the *bhadra-koshia*. The *kudyastambhas* and *karnastambhas* are of the *bhadra-koshia* type. They are straight from the *vedi* without having any distinct base. The shaft is plain and rectangular in cross-section but their upper half is well carved. The first member above the shaft is a rectangular panel (*malasthana*) mostly decorated with pearl strands hanging down. Above this member are the *Lasuna tadu Kumba*, *Phalaka* and *Potikas*. The *lasuna* portion is plain. The cushion-shaped capitals (*Kumba*) are roughly square. The *Padma* and *Phalaka* are also rectangular. The brackets are three-pronged with grooved frontal sides (*taranga-potika*).

The *bhadra koshias* are rectangular niches flanked by a pilaster on either side. These pilasters are also of the *malasthana* type like the *Kudyastambhas* but are shorter and carry a lintel, above which the wall is a beautiful *ek-tala-Vimana*, with *stupi* carved in Dravidian style. In the Central apex is a *grasa* head (*Kiritimukha*) is carved.

The northern and eastern entrances of the *Mahamandapa* are flanked by *Vaishnava dvarapalakas*, one on each side. The *dvarapalakas* on the eastern side are 7' 10" high and the pedestal measures 3' 5" x 2' x 11". The *dvarapalaka* on the northern side is a little taller measuring 8' 6" and the base is 3' x 2' 6" x 2' 5".

At the entrance of the *Mahamandapa* in the eastern side, is a high platform, where an agent sits and collects tolls from the pilgrims. Hence, the platform is named *Undil platform*.

On all the three sides of the *Mahamandapa*, there is an open pillared corridor having 36 pillars. But recently this is covered on all the three sides by iron grills.

#### iv. Dhvajastambha and Balipitha

In front of the griled entrance are a *Dvajastambha* and a *balipitha*. The *dhvajastambha* is made up of wood installed on a small *adhistana* made of solid stone. The *dhvajastambha* (21'10" high, 5'3"x5'4" base) is a tall pillar with a star-shaped base and circular shaft and the bottom portion is now covered with gold plated brass plates and is decorated with a metal flag on the top. The *balipitha* (5'4"x5'4"x6'7") has three divisions viz. a *pitha*, a *padma* and a *karnika*, the lowest being square in shape, the central, octagonal and the topmost, circular. In front of the *Dvajastambha*, is a small *Garuda Shrine*, measuring 5' x 4'10" x 10'9".

#### v. Vahana - Mandapa

(New plan) is the site plan of the *Vahana mandapam* of the temple. Though it is called *Vahana mandapam*, now this place is used as a place of rest for officials and important people. At present, the *vahanas* are placed on the griled pillared corridor of the temple. This *mandapa* is square in shape (33' x 27'7") having sixteen pillars.

#### vi. Kalyana Mandapa

The open space in front of the *Vahana mandapa* has a flight of steps on one side and that leads to the *Kalyanamandapa*. The *Mandapa* is 42'x31' and has a small platform at one end measuring 42'x31' and the *mandapa* has 28 pillars in four rows. Special festivals like *Kalyanotsava* etc. are conducted here.

#### vii. Uyyala mandapa

In the site plan is the *Uyyalamandapa* in the upper storey of the temple. It appears that this *mandapa* is used for *Uyyala* festival of the Lord, in olden days. The *mandapa* is in shape measuring 25' x 25' and has sixteen pillars in four rows.

For example, the cost of rice ■ stated ■ be one gajjana ■ 1 1/4 *rukhas* for 7 *tumus* and 3/4 *kunchas*.

Item	Rate		Quantity	
	Ga	Ru	Tumus	Kunchas
Rice	2	1 1/4	7	3/4
Blackgram	2 1/2	5/4	6	1/2 pulses

Another inscription of 1563 A.D.<sup>11</sup> which adds ■■■■ cash to ■■■ temple treasury is looked after by the *jiyar* of Ahobila *matha*. The specifications registered ■ the inscription are ■■■ 600 *varahas* ■ given by an officer to the temple treasury to purchase some wet land measuring 6 *marthurs* and the location of the land also is specified. ■ turn, the said chief Vobularaju is stated ■ have made a gift of the said 6 *marthurs* of land ■ the temple and agreed to submit the produce at ■■■ of 5 *puttis* for each *marthur* totalling to 30 *marthurs* of paddy to ■■■ temple ■ gift and this produce will be utilised for the daily offerings to Nammalvar at ■■■■ of 1/4 *tumu* rice ■■■ *kotha rukha* per day. It is quite possible that ■■■ area of land was reckoned in ■■■■ of the quantity of potential produce raised in that ■■■■ of land. The total amounts ■ 4 1/2 ■■■■ for *Amruthapadi* for the year and other expenditure 360 *rukha's* per year. The cook charges 120 *kotha rukhas* and the amount totals upto 480 *kotha rukhas* per year. Another condition is ■■■ the offerings are to be made in the name of the said chiefs and *prasadam* is ■ be utilised for feeding 12 Vaishnavas daily.

Another inscription dated 26th August, 1563 A.D.<sup>12</sup> describes some more ■■■■ of ■■■ temple. This registers the gift of income from the village Kalutapalli situated in *Korakolasima* amounting to 230 *varahas*. Out of this amount, the *polivutu* offerings would cost 162 *Gajjanas* (*varahas*) and other offerings amount to 68 *varahas*, the total would be 230 *varahas*. Again Vobula Raju made a gift of 1 *puttu* of land in Padakandla village which was equivalent to 40 *varahas* and another 2 *puttis* of land in Dornipadu village the income of which would be 40 *varahas* and another 2 *puttis* of land in the village Injedu, the income of which would be 40 *varahas*, and another wet land ■ *marthurs* in the village Bayyapagudur the income of which was 20 *varahas*. The total yield of these four items of land amount to 370 *varahas*. And this amount is ■ be spent for the offerings to the god during ■■■ period of stay of god in the mandapa constructed by the donor in Kamasamudram Narasayya's house. So far, the income and expenditure of the gift and lands and the offerings ■ the god ■■ broadly stated. There follows ■ detailed description of certain items which are missing.

Some items extant may be given ■ follows :

S. No.	Item	Rate		
		<i>Varaha</i>	<i>Rukha</i>	<i>Kanis</i>
1	2 plate rice	1 <i>varaha</i>	1 <i>rukha</i>	-
2	Pepper (1/16 of one measure cost being)	-	-	2 <i>kanis</i>
3	Curd (3 measures cost)	1/4 <i>rukha</i>	-	2 <i>visas</i>
4	■■■ Betels	1 <i>rukha</i>	-	-
5	400 leaves	1 <i>rukha</i>	-	-
6	■■■ paste	1/2 <i>rukha</i>	-	-
7	Fire wood	-	2 <i>visas</i> of <i>Rukha</i>	-
8	Cook	1/4 <i>rukha</i>	-	-

The streets already mentioned lead to the car-street at its northern end. The car-street also has a row of *mandapas* on either side and in the centre near this street, there is *Bigala Anjaneya Temple* and the *Lanja Koneru*. In this street, there is the car-platform which enables us to form an idea of the enormous size of the car used in olden days. This street with the central row of *mandapas* has been included in the preserves. Perhaps the car was dragged within this one street. Even now we can find that in many a town in the ceded districts the car is dragged only through a single broad street set apart for this purpose. But the car at Upper Ahobilam should have been stationary.

At right angles to the *Sannidhi Street* described already, runs the long front outer wall of the Lower Ahobilam temple. The four outer walls are as massive as those of a bastion in a hill fort and the stones used in the construction are massive but not solid enough. Round these four outer walls are the ruins of the *Sannidhi Street*. In one of these streets, we can find some gigantic blocks of stone which were intended as beams for the unfinished *Mandapa*. How those ancients with no machinery could help them lift those huge beams over the massive pillars is a subject of great curiosity. Perhaps, they must have made use of the principle of inclination and its engineering technique in order to lift heavy pillars up to the top of the Unfinished *Mandapa*. We also find the *Gollamitta Anjaneya temple*.

Entering the main gate of the temple the first thing that strikes our eye is the "Tower of Victory". This is a magnificent tall column of monolithic stone and is full of architectural carvings on all sides. It stands on a platform on the southern side of the entrance and the sides of the platform contain inscription commemorating the event of Victory of Ranganaya's army over the Mahammadans.

Proceeding a little further, we see the *Sannidhi Pushkarini* on the Southern side. The dilapidated *mandapas* round it, were said to have been formerly used as Vedic Schools.

Just opposite to the *Sannidhi-Koneru* is the *Bhashyakara Sannidhi*. It is a very spacious compound with massive stone-built walls now in ruins. The *Sannidhi* itself is a very fine piece of Dravidian architecture in all its sumptuous details. It was in a completely dilapidated state. In 1914, there was a proposal to rebuild it and it was one of the items mentioned in the printed notice circulated by the *math* during that year. The work of reconstruction was taken up in earnest. The work of demolition preparatory to the rebuilding work has been ordered and the Ramanuja image was bodily removed from the *Ramulavari - Mandapa* and seated there with strict orders to remain there. So, probably, the above *Sannidhi* has been reconstructed. However, at present, the *Bhashyakara Sannidhi* is in a ruined condition.

From the outer *prakaram*, we enter the inner one by a gate without a *gopura* and the gateway is full of architectural beauty. The *prakara* was covered with thick bushes and debris as it obtained in 1914. However, this *prakara* is kept tidy in recent days. There are some *mandapas* in the *prakara* also. One was used as a *Bheri mandapa* and another as a *Taligal mandapa* during the *Navaratri* festivals. The latter *mandapa* does not now exist at all. From the *prakara*, we enter the next one by a gate called the *Kanchu Gumma Toranam* as called from the bronze plates and knobs covering the doors.

## B. The Main Wall

### i. Garbhagriha and Ardha mandapa

These two form the original cave of the temple. The *garbhagriha* is rectangular in plan and measures 10'2" x 10'4". The outer walls of the *ardhamandapa* are slightly inset from the line of the outer walls of the *garbhagriha* which measures 28' x 10'2" with a circumambulatory path. Inside the *garbhagriha*, the main deity is placed a little below the exact centre and directly opposite the

front doorway. In the interior, both the *garbhagriha* and the *ardhamandapa* are 10' in height and have flat ceilings. The ceiling of the *garbhagriha* has a central square panel with a concentric circular *padma* motif. The *ardhamandapa* ceiling does not have any decoration. The door frame of the *garbhagriha* has *Kumba* type pilaster on the jambs and some figures at the base and a *Lalatabimba* on the lintel. The figures at the base of the jambs are the *Vishnavu dvarapalakas* and *Lalatabimba* is that of Gajalakshmi. On either side of the doorway is a life-size *dvarapalaka* figure now kept leaning against the front wall of the *ardhamandapa*, but these, however, were not part of the original planning.

In external elevation the *garbhagriha* and *ardhamandapa* have an *adhistana* supporting a *bhitti*. The *prastara* and *hara* portions are now embedded in a *robusta* roof recently constructed. The *garbhagriha* is crowned by a tower.

The *Adhistana* consists of a series of functional mouldings. *Upana*, the lowermost moulding, projects beyond the vertical norm and is surmounted by the *Jagati*. This is oblong in shape. Over this is the *kumba*, which is three *hatched* (*tripatta kumuda*). Next is the *kantha* a recessed moulding, oblong in elevation, and connecting the other mouldings above. The *patika* which is above the *kantha* is thick. The topmost member of the plinth is the *vedi* (also called *prati*).

Immediately above the *adhistana* is the *bhitti* decorated with *karnastambhas* (Corner pilasters), *kudyastambhas* (wall pilasters) and *devakostas* (niches).

The outerwalls of the *garbhagriha* and *ardhamandapa* contain some superb small reliefs. Incidents from the *Nrisimha Purana* are depicted on neat little panels. These are set against a background, as it were, of restrained decoration on the wall surface. On the western wall, the surface is divided into three parts by pilasters. There are also *devakoshtas* and *kumbha panjaras*. Between them are three horizontal rows of reliefs.

The *Pranala* meant to drain out water from the *garbhagriha* is visible on the northern side at the *Jagati* level. This projects out of the wall for about 1'6" and has a lion's face at the end.

Above the roof, the *sikhara* part of the *Vimana* super-structure is visible. Though *vimana* is of recent times, it reflects features of the earlier components. The *Vimana* is in two *talas*. The *hara* on the first consists of a *karnakuta*, a *panjara* with an image in it, a *sala*, another *panjara* and another *karnakuta*. On the second *tala*, the scheme is a *sala* flanked by *karnakutas*. There are a number of self-imaginative images. The *stupi* rises from a four-petalled lotus.

## ii. Small rooms

The *ardhamandapa* (28'x10'2" with six pillars) is continued by an oblong construction. On the northern side of this *mandapa* are placed bronze images of the temple, on the southern side, there are four rooms.

## iii. Mahamandapa

Axially in front of the above *mandapa*, is an eight-pillared square shaped *mahamandapa* (22'8" x 22'8"). On the northern, southern sides of this *mandapa*, at its junction with the preceding unit, there are entrance porches. But, now the southern entrance is permanently closed and northern entrance leads to the *mahamandapa* of the Goddess shrine. The main entrance i.e. the eastern entrance opens out to the *rangamandapa*.

## iv. Ammavaru shrine

This is somewhat small and consists of a *garbhagriha* and an *ardhamandapa*, (44'10"x33'6"). Besides, there are also rooms used for different purposes and also for keeping different bronze im-

This is continued by a *mahamandapa*, which is uneven in size. At the north-western corner, Andal Shrine is located. According to the temple plan, (old) Andal Shrine was located in the southern side of the outer *prakara*. No one gives any reliable information about the shifting of the Andal shrine. The *mahamandapa* has 22 pillars which is also unevenly distributed. The northern entrance has a flight of steps, which leads to the first *prakara* of the temple. The eastern side is totally open leading to *rangamandapa*.

#### v. Rangamandapa

This mandapa is the most important part in the whole temple. There are 12 pillars distributed in ten rows. Each pillar is a work of extraordinary merit, each ingeniously designed, most intricately carved and richly sculptured with mythological stories, most pleasing to the eye and instructive to the mind. As to their general pattern, most of these can be described as square shafts but some have cubical blocks divided by polygonal fillets, but each part of it is minutely carved. Some are made to display a central core with a number of subsidiary shafts to form its outer body. Some of them show the technique of undercutting. Each one of them is a type by itself and is marked by ingenuity of craftsmanship. They are better enjoyed visually than through any verbal description.

#### vi. The Mahadevara - Gopura

Though the upper part of the tower is modern, the lower part is considerably old. The whole tower is veritably a masterpiece creation. To a great extent, the upper part retains its original components. The outer face and inner face of the lower part have been sculptured exquisitely. The sculptures on the base are not mere architectural forms. They show a harmonious blending of figure along with architectural and decorative elements. Nothing is more remarkable than the manner in which vertical and horizontal lines have been combined on the inner surface of the *Gopura* in order to produce a rich effect. There are nearly seven horizontal rows of reliefs. The bottom contains *sikharas* which look as if they were the *vimanas* submerged. Then, a row of seated *ganas* apparently playing music, with a bold *adhistana* member, in which very small *vimanas* are inset. Then a number of elephants march by, one divided from the other by pilasters.

On the base of the *Gopura* outside, there are 12 niches each on the right and left sides. The pillars to serve as jambs are nearly 22' high and are in single granitic blocks. These door jambs and the side structures, are adorned with beautiful sculptures, all elegantly carved with a singular precision and a unique proportion. The figures standing on *makaras* and shown as hanging in the creepers flowing down from above are exquisite sculptures.

#### vii. Dhvajastambha and Balipitha

In front of the *Gopura* a platform extends further. On the extended portion stands a *dhvajastambha* and a *balipitha*. The *dhvajastambha* is a tall pillar with a square base and a circular shaft and is now covered with brass plates, and is decorated with a metal flag at the top. The *balipitha* has three divisions, viz. a *mitha*, a *padma* and a *karnika*, the lowest division being square in shape, the central one being octagonal and the topmost being circular.

#### viii. Other mandapas and shrines

Beyond the open yard around the central unit are a few subsidiary structures. In all the four corners, we find different shrines.

#### ix. Kitchen

Kitchen is situated in the south eastern corner. This is square in shape measuring 37' x 37'. This is a plain structure.

### x. Kalyana Mandapa

This is situated in the south eastern corner, on a raised platform, measuring 100' x 31'7". It has fifty pillars, each being slender and elegant. They form four rows of pillars with two rows bearing lions standing in the *Yali* posture. The other two rows of pillars are embedded into the stone walls.

### xi. Satagopayathi shrine

In the north-western corner is the shrine of Satagopayathi. This is a small structure having a *Garbhagriha* and an eight-pillared *mandapa* in front. This measures 32'2" x 21'8".

### xii. Ramalayam

In the north-eastern corner is the *Ramalayam*. This is quite a big structure measuring 36'8" x 90' and has 50 pillars distributed in 10 rows. A number of icons, which were placed earlier in this shrine, are now shifted and placed in the *Kalyana mandapa*.

### xiii. Mandapas in the second prakara

Beyond the open yard around the second unit is a broad pillared cloister running along the prakara wall on the western and the southern sides. This cloister is on a high base and consists of rows of pillars, the last row touching the prakara wall, thus providing two long bays running parallel all along the outer-wall on its inner side. These bayed corridors, however, are used as residential places by temple priests, manager and others connected with the temple.

### xiv. Mond-Gopura

This is the second *gopura* in the temple. This is an *Unfinished Gopura* and has only a lower part. The upper portion remains incomplete. The lower portion is almost similar to that of the first *gopura* in its delineation.

### xv. Jayastambha and other structures

Right in front of the third entrance is a *Jayastambha*, a *Bhashyakarak sannidhi*, and a weavers' *chattram*. It is clear that the *Jayastambha* was erected to commemorate the victory of Sri Rangaraya over Ibrahim Qutbshahi.<sup>4</sup> There is an inscription displayed on the stone encircling the middle of the base of the *Stambha*. Risking repetition, it is worth noting that the inscription registers the gift of a piece of land in the village Alamur purchased from Van Satagopa Jiyar and other officials connected with the management of the temple, for raising a garden with coconut and other trees in favour of God Ahobaleswara by Avubhalraju son of Timmayyadeva - maharaju of Gargya-gotra, *Apastamba - Sutra* and *Yajus - Sakha*. On the northern side is a dilapidated *mandapa*, in which Ramanuja was installed and a *Bhashyakarak sannidhi* in the early days. On the top of this shrine, abutting the prakara wall, is a newly built weavers' *chattram*.

## 3. Chronology And Development

### A. Chronological Data From Tradition and Epigraphy

#### I. Upper Ahobilam

The *Narasimhaswami* temples at Ahobilam as they stand now are the result of a continuous architectural activity through centuries from the time of their inception as can be made out from several pieces of evidence.

Traditionally it is believed that Tirumangai Alvar (7th-8th cent.A.D.) has composed songs in praise of the god of Ahobilam(Upper). Also the *Ahobilam Kaifiyat* records that the Chalukyan kings (8th century A.D.) worshipped the deity of Ahobilam.

However, it is clear from the epigraphical evidence<sup>6</sup> that the Upper Ahobilam temple was in existence and also popular, earlier to Chalukya Varman II (C.8th cent.A.D.).

The next record<sup>7</sup> (Inscription of Andhra Desa, No. 472) of any utility is of one Prolaya Vema's record, (1325-53 A.D.) which registers the construction of flight of steps in the Upper Ahobilam temple. Another inscription<sup>8</sup> (though not found now) refers to the construction of Mahamandapa in the Upper Ahobilam by Harshana II (1377-1404 A.D.).

Stylistically the pillars found in the Mahamandapa, however, is of a significant type and these pillars exhibit a style, which was in vogue in the Kakatiya temples.

From these evidences, we can presume that the cave temple at Upper Ahobilam might have come into existence earlier than 7th-8th cent A.D. and the other components of the main unit of the temple may have been constructed between 11th-14th cent A.D.

## ii. Lower Ahobilam Temple

An inscription of 1515 A.D.<sup>9</sup> states that Krishnadevaraya visited the temple and offered varieties of jewellery to the god at the Lower Ahobilam.

Saluva Narasimha (1486-1491 A.D.) in his work *Ramabhyudayam* clearly mentions that he was born by the grace of god, Narasimha of Ahobilam. In another place, he calls himself as the disciple of Van-Satagopa Jiyar and as one blessed as *Vira-Narasimha*.

Very interestingly enough, an inscription of 1546 A.D.<sup>10</sup> names the main image of the Lower Ahobilam as Vira-Narasimha.

The *garbhagriha* and the *ardhamandapa* form a compact unified structure, both by way of the mode of construction and style. The *adhistana* and *prastara* of both these are continuous. The decoration of the *bhitti* is also identical on the two. Stylistically the *adhistana* is of the type regularly seen in the early Vijayanagara temples, the order and form of the Upana to *prati* being almost identical with that seen in the Madhavara Svami temple at Gorantla, Ramalingeswara temple and Chintalaraya temple at Tadpatri. So, it appears that this unit of the Narasimhasvami temple, i.e., its *garbhagriha* and the *ardhamandapa* may belong to the early Vijayanagara tradition.

Stylistically, the pillar types found in the Mahamandapa of the temple are similar to the pillars found in the Ramalayam, Kalyana mandapa and Jiyar temple, and these pillars are identical with the pillars found in the Madhavara Svami temple at Gorantla, built by Saluva Narasimha (1485-1506 A.D.)

Also, we know clearly that, the early Vijayanagara architectural tradition has expanded in the Rayalaseema area during the Vijayanagara empire from its beginning to the downfall.

We may infer from the above evidences that the main unit of the temple along with the *mahamandapa*, may have been constructed during the time of Saluva Narasimha.



#### **4. TABLE OF CHRONOLOGY**

##### ***A. Upper Ahobilam Temple***

- |   |                       |
|---|-----------------------|
| 1. The Garbhagriha (main cave)<br>and the adjacent cave   | C 2nd-3rd Cent.A.D.   |
| 2. Chenchulakshmi shrine, Sudarshana<br>"  and mahamandapa | C 11th-12th Cent.A.D. |

##### ***B. Lower Ahobilam Temple***

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. Garbhagriha, ardhmandapa,<br>Mahamandapa, Ramalayam,<br>Jiyar's Shrine and main unit<br>of the Kalyana mandapam | Saluva Narasimha's time<br>(1485 - 1506 A.D.) |
| 2. Rangamandapa and the mandapa<br>in front of the Tayar Shrine  | C. 16th Cent.A.D.                             |

404.6437



1. PLAN OF NARASIMHA SVAMI TEMPLE AT  
UPPER AHOBILAM (OLD) PREPARED IN 1916

front doorway. In the interior, both the *garbhagriha* and the *ardhamandapa* are 10' in height and have flat ceilings. The ceiling of the *garbhagriha* has a central square panel with a concentric circular *padma* motif. The *ardhamandapa* ceiling does not have any decoration. The door frame of the *garbhagriha* has *Kumba* type pilaster on the jambs and some figures at the base and a *Lalatabimba* on the lintel. The figures at the base of the jambs are the *Vishnavu dvarapalakas* and *Lalatabimba* is that of Gajalakshmi. On either side of the doorway is a life-size *dvarapalaka* figure now kept leaning against the front wall of the *ardhamandapa*, but these, however, were not part of the original planning.

In external elevation the *garbhagriha* and *ardhamandapa* have an *adhistana* supporting a *bhitti*. The *prastara* and *hara* portions are now embedded in a *robusta* roof recently constructed. The *garbhagriha* is crowned by a tower.

The *Adhistana* consists of a series of functional mouldings. *Upana*, the lowermost moulding, projects beyond the vertical norm and is surmounted by the *Jagati*. This is oblong in shape. Over this is the *kumba*, which is three *hastas* (*tripatta kumuda*). Next is the *kantha* a recessed moulding, oblong in elevation, and connecting the other mouldings above. The *patika* which is above the *kantha* is thick. The topmost member of the plinth is the *vedi* (also called *prati*).

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## ii. Small rooms

The *ardhamandapa* (28'x10'2" with six pillars) is continued by an oblong construction. On the northern side of this *mandapa* are placed bronze images of the temple, on the southern side, there are four rooms.

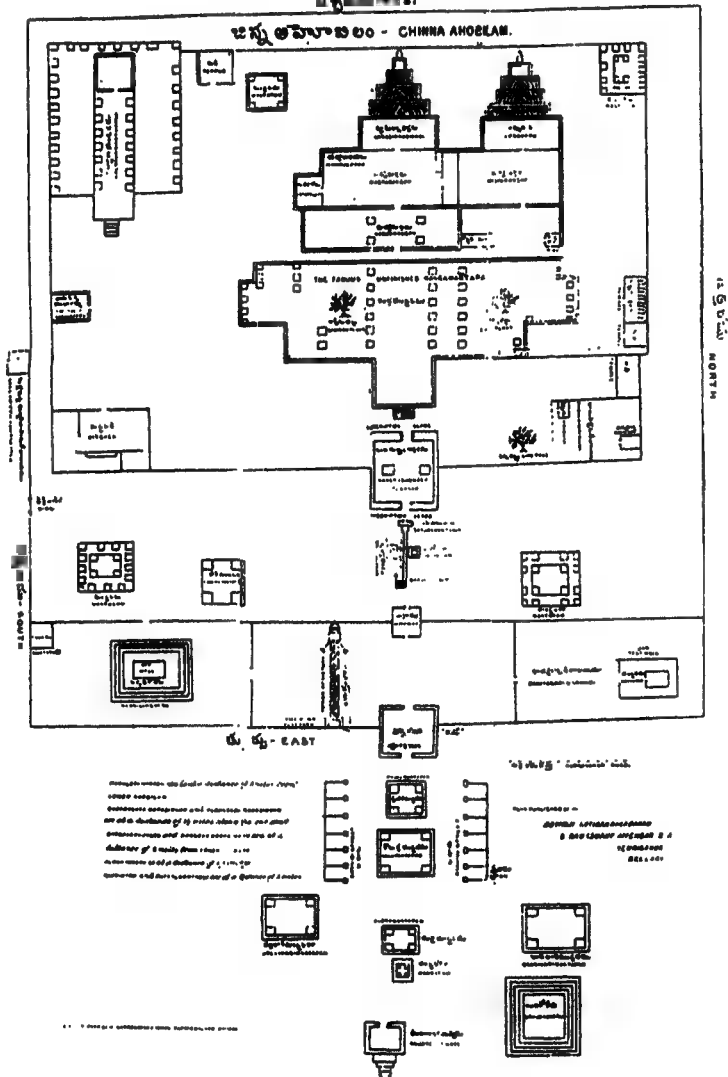
## iii. Mahamandapa

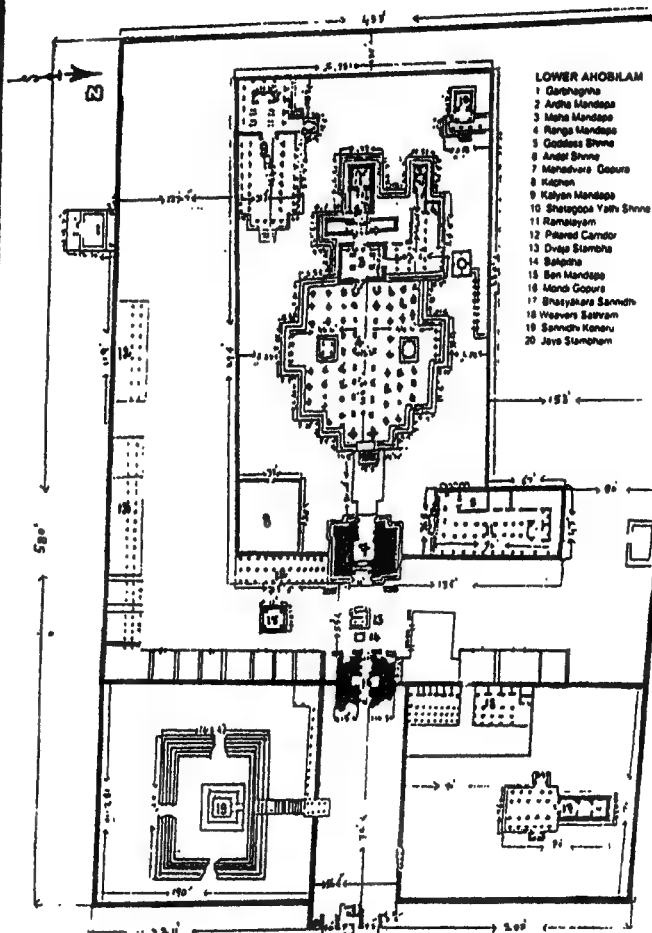
Axially in front of the above *mandapa*, is an eight-pillared square shaped *mahamandapa* (22'8" x 22'8"). On the northern, southern sides of this *mandapa*, at its junction with the preceding unit, there are entrance porches. But, now the southern entrance is permanently closed and northern entrance leads to the *mahamandapa* of the Goddess shrine. The main entrance i.e. the eastern entrance opens out to the *rangamandapa*.

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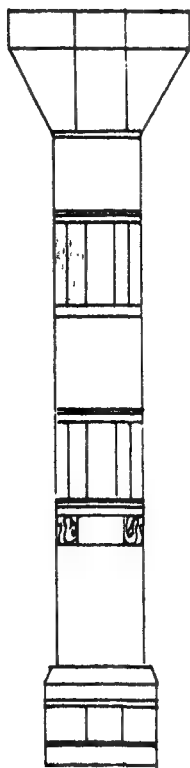
## THE NEW YORK TIMES



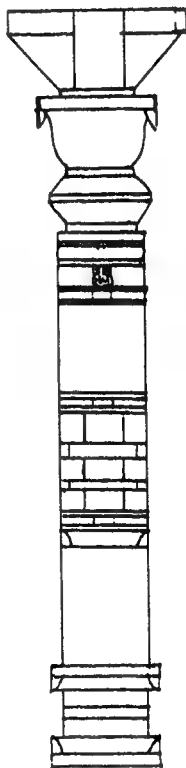


**PLAN OF  
LAKSHMI NARASIMHA SWAMY TEMPLE  
AT LOWER AHOILAM**

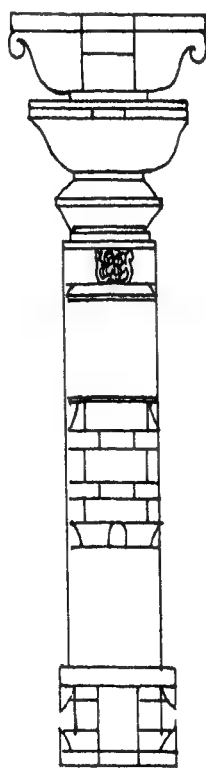
# TYPES OF PILLARS USED IN THE NARASIMHA SVAMI TEMPLES UPPER AHOBILAM



1

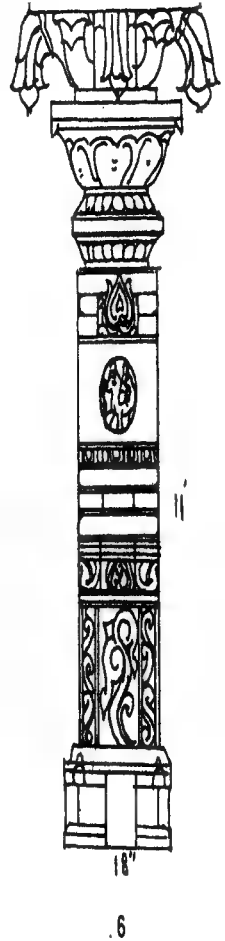
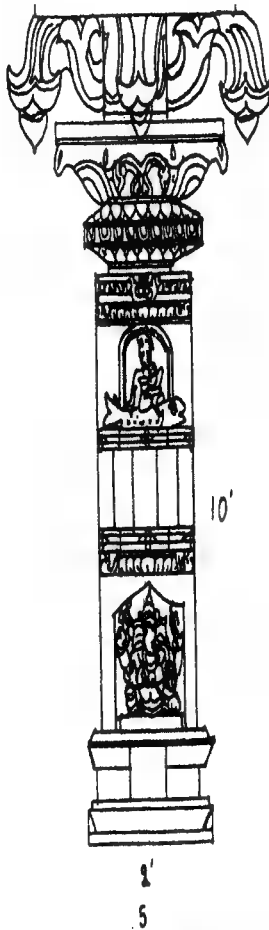
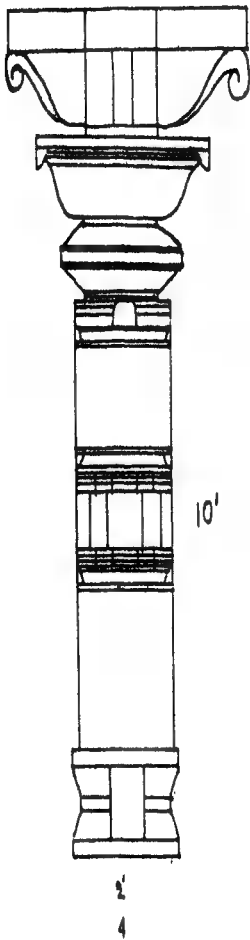


2



3

- 1 A PILLAR IN THE NARASIMHA MANDAPA
2. A PILLAR IN THE NARASIMHA MANDAPA
3. A PILLAR IN THE NARASIMHA MANDAPA

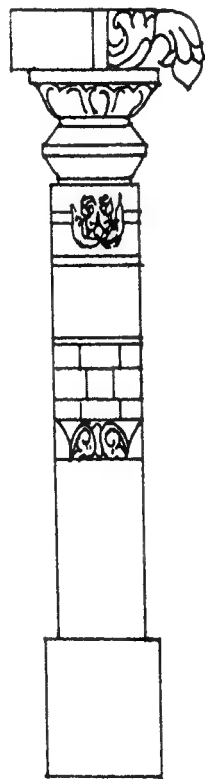
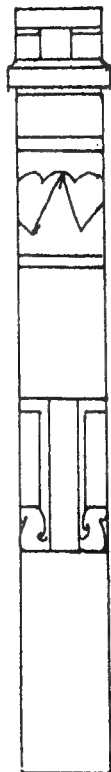
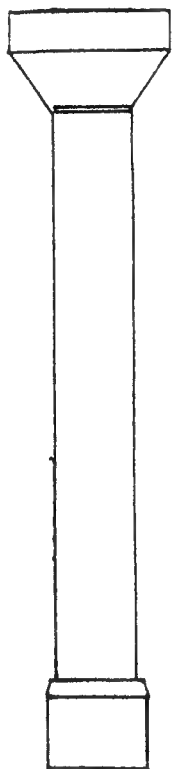


4. A PILLAR IN THE MAHA MANDAPA

5. A PILLAR IN THE MAHA MANDAPA, PILLARED CORRIDOR (EASTERN SIDE)

6. A PILLAR IN THE MAHA MANDAPA, PILLARED CORRIDOR (EASTERN SIDE)

TYPES OF PILLARS USED IN THE NARASIMHA SVAMI TEMPLE  
LOWER AHOBILAM



2

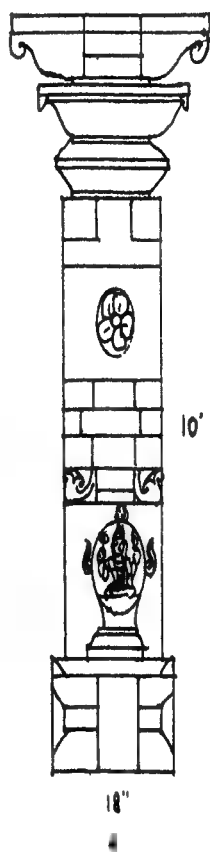
3

1 A PILLAR IN THE RAMALAYAM

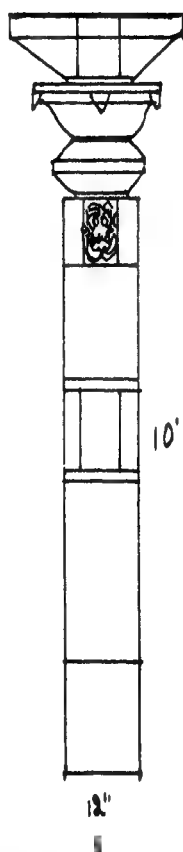
2 A PILLAR IN THE ARDHAMANDAPA (INCOMPLETE)

3 A PILLAR IN THE ARDHAMANDAPA (INCOMPLETE)

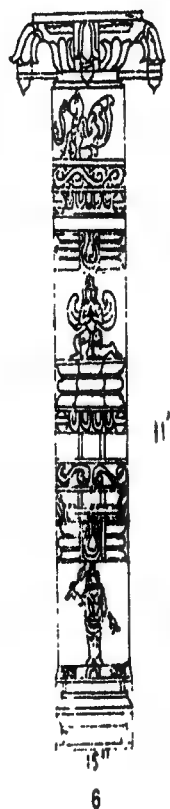




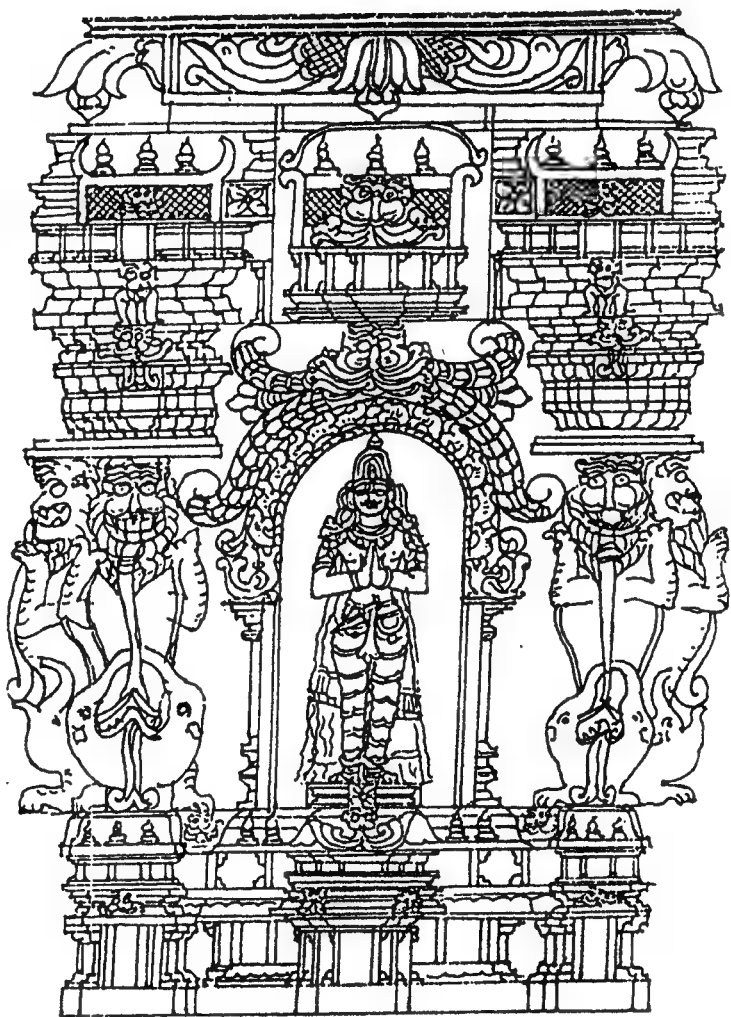
4 A PILLAR IN THE ARDHMANDAPA (TAYAR SHRINE)



5 A PILLAR IN THE MAHAMANDAPA (NARASIMHA SHRINE)



6 A PILLAR IN THE MAHAMANDAPA (TAYAR SHRINE)

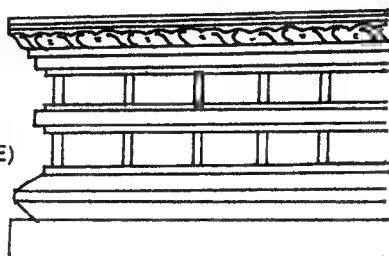


7 A PILLAR IN THE RANGAMANDAPA

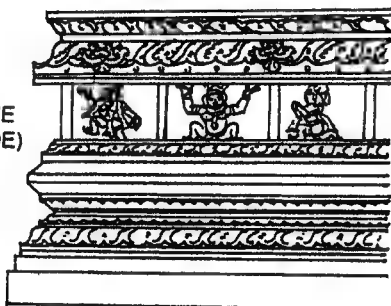
LOWER AHOBILAM

# TYPES OF ADHISTANAS USED IN THE UPPER AHOBILAM

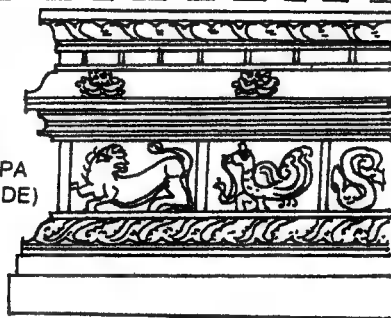
GARBHAGRIHA  
(NORTHERN SIDE)



ALWAR SHRINE  
(WESTERN SIDE)

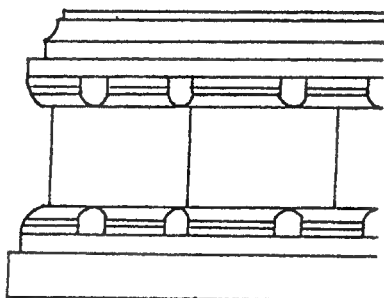


MAHAMANDAPA  
(NORTHERN SIDE)

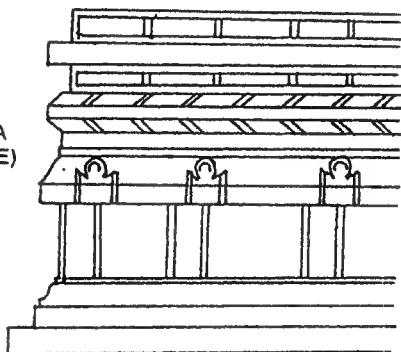


# TYPES OF ADHISTANAS USED IN THE LOWER AHOBILAM

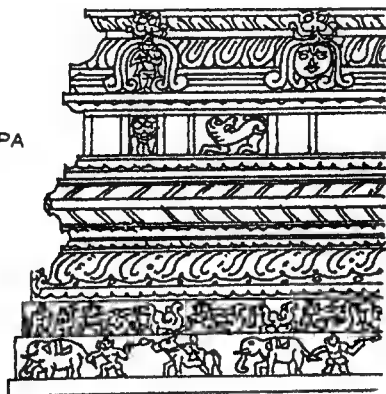
GARBHAGRIHA  
(WESTERN SIDE)



MAHAMANDAPA  
(SOUTHERN SIDE)



RANGAMANDAPA



## SCULPTURE AND ICONOGRAPHY

The temple possesses a number of stone and metal images representative of *various* stylistic traditions and *pancharatra* iconographic forms. This being a Srivaishnava temple, there is preponderance of the Vaishnava images. Among them the images of Vishnu and his various *avatars* form a major percentage. Strictly speaking, according to the Srivaishnava theology, the Lord is the only *one*. Yet, because of his *infinite* dynamic vitality and creative activity of cosmic proportions, He can be comprehended by men in his different modes, diverse appearances, various forms and unlimited *energies*. Out of His infinite mercy, He chooses to take forms and shapes, to *assume* appearances, and to undertake universal welfare activities. They include the *vyuha*, *avatara*, *murti* and *Sakti* modes of revelation as well as the other shapes and forms. Thus there are ten avatars attributed to Vishnu in the Hindu pantheon of deities.

Vishnu is unique as the only *one* among the Hindu deities to be credited with *avatars*. He is said to have assumed several forms in his role as protector. This is said to have been explained by the *puranic* motif of the *daivarupam* in order to resolve the recurring conflict between the gods and the demons.<sup>1</sup> Huntington would consider the *avatara theory* to have conformed to an evolutionary pattern. He *tries* to show that as the first three *avatars* are concerned with rescuing something from the waters, the resultant forms have approximately been fish-man, tortoise-vedas, knowledge, and boar-earth. Thereafter, the emergence of Narasimha, the hybrid form, half-man and half-beast, is said to be symbolic of *humanity* while *Vishnu* is physically undeveloped, a dwarf, yet he is said to possess within himself the *essence* of divine power. He takes possession of the world. Parasurama represents the full potential of human physical strength directed for a single purpose by the power of will. The *Ramavatara* symbolises moral strength and represents the human ideal. Judged by every human canon of ethical conduct, the superiority of moral strength over physical powers is exemplified by the episode of Rama meeting Parasurama resulting in the *retirement* of the latter. The advent of Krishna (along with Balarama) does not make Rama's position less important, for morality is always presupposed in the teachings of Krishna.<sup>2</sup> As Kalki is yet to appear, it is *hard* to be difficult to fix him in *the* scheme, but as his colour is white, it may represent a symbol of purity and *also* the fullness or plenitude.<sup>3</sup>

The above pattern of evolution is purely interpretational and is neither historical nor chronological in its association with Vishnu. For, the originators of the *avatara* theory clearly did not resort to an evolutionary pattern for the incarnation. The series of *avatara* did not assume the same importance in all the regions and there is a clear preference for some over the others in specific geographical areas. The *avatara* concept provided an easy means of bringing into the ever-expanding pantheon all entrants into *Vaishnava* worship, for example, the *Alvars* and *Acharyas* and even the personified and deified weapons.

The *Srivaishnava* *agamas* consider that the temples of Lord Vishnu should have the images of His consort and attendant deities. Many a devotee often finds much solace in worshipping these deities as he would find in worshipping the main god; the choice of a god for religious devotion is out of individual volition conditioned by the attitude and purpose of the devotee. All these points have been taken into consideration by the *agamas* in formulating their prescriptions in which enough provision has been made to install various types of deities, both major and minor. Equally so, the *Alvars* and *Acharyas* are respected and worshipped in iconic form. They, in a way, are the "embodiments of humility, devotion and absolute surrender in body and soul" the three important features emphasized in *Srivaishnava* devotionism. They are the guides and models to the aspirants of *moksha*. All these naturally find representation in the *Srivaishnava* temples.

## 1. Consecrated Images

### A. Stone images (Upper Ahobilam)

#### i. The main deity

The chief deity installed in the main shrine of this temple is *Ugra-Narasimha*. The inscriptions refer to this as *Ahobala Narasimha*.

This is a beautiful image made of *Salagrama* stone. It is 2' high and is depicted in sitting posture in the *sambhanga* pose. The right leg is folded and the left leg is dangling down. It is two-handed and is depicted tearing out *Hiranyakasipu's* entrails. The demon is lying in the lap of the god, the demon's head is to the right and his legs to the left. The figure of *Lakshmi* in the form of *Srivatsa* on the right chest is very interesting. Iconographically this image of *Narasimha* is very unique. This figure very much resembles the figure of *Narasimha* on a plaque from *Manimangalam* in the *Chengalput* district belonging to the *Pallava* period.

The image is somewhat peculiar stylistically, without conforming completely to any of the prevailing styles such as *Pallava* or early *Chalukyan*, in this region. However the form of the image is close to those seen in the *Ikshvakus* or *Vishnukundin* tradition. A stone image of *Prahlada* in *Anjali* posture is installed in a niche opposite to the idol of the main deity. This image is 1' high.

#### ii. Chenchu-Lakshmi

This is the consort image of *Ahobala Narasimha* installed in the shrine at the north-western corner inside the temple. The image is about 3'1" high. The goddess is shown as seated in *padmasana* and having four arms; the lower two being in the *abhaya* and *varada mudras* and the rear ones carrying the lotus-bud in each of them. She is richly decked with the *Karanda-makuta* and other jewels. The *prabhavali* is carved in the same stone and it has a creeper design.

The creeper design in the *prabhavali*, the *karanda makuta* and the style of the image show that this image is possibly of the 10th - 11th centuries A.D.

### III. Images in the second

There are four images now kept in the cave, adjacent to the main cave. The images of Siva Lingam, Ganesha, Ugra Narasimha and two unidentified images. According to the local tradition and No.6 in the New Plan, there existed an Eswaralayan.

#### iv. Siva Linga

Sivalinga is about 1'1" high. The bottom portion is totally embedded in the floor. The *soma-sutra* the portion above are visible.

#### v. Ganapathi

There is a figure of Ganapathi by side of Sivalinga. It is nearly 1'5" high. The Deity is shown as seated on a pedestal, with a mouse depicted on a *piṭha* and a halo behind the head, hands depicted in the naturalistic posture, holding *paraśu* and *padma* in the upper hands and *ekadanta* and sweet preparation in the lower hands. He wears *ardhoruka* with a *naga udarabandha*. The ears are characteristically big. The delineation of a broad chest and broad shoulders and lack of ornamentation displayed in this image are some of the characteristic features of the early sculptures (i.e. Pallava or Chalukya). The disposition of the trunk i.e. the entire trunk turned to the left with a curve at the tip which rests on the bowl of a lotus in the left suggests that the image is that of the Karnakata tradition<sup>4</sup> and the presence of *karanda makuta* reminds us of similar decoration in the early Chalukyan sculptures. Thus the image represents the early-later Chalukya transitional period i.e. to about 8th - 9th century A.D.

#### vi. Ugra-Narasimha

There is another image, Ugra Narasimha with four hands. The upper hands carry *Sankha* and *Chakra* and the lower hands tearing open the abdomen of the demon. It is in a sitting posture in the *samabhanga* pose. The right leg is folded and the left leg is dangling down. The demon is lying on the lap of the god, the demon's head is to the right and his legs to the left and is shown as holding a sword and a shield in his hands.

The lion face, the form of the *Sankha* and *Chakra*, the size of the *śrīvatsa*<sup>5</sup>, the natural postures, and the style of delineation show that the image is possibly of the early Chalukyan style.

#### vii. Two unidentified images

1. Goddess Lakshmi in *padmasana* is seated on a *padma* motif. It is two handed holding *nilotpala* flower in the right hand in the *katakahasta* posture whereas the left hand is in the *varada hasta* pose. She is also shown with well-moulded breasts, and several necklaces. The *kiritamakuta* is on her head and the eyes are in *samadrishṭi* pose. *Makarakundalas* are found in her ears. The ornaments such as *manjiras*, *keyuras*, necklaces, the *mangala* are found on the image of the Goddess. The style of delineation shows that this image is possibly of the Pallava-early Chalukyan style.

The other is a form of Vishnu in *Bhogasana* posture. Vishnu is represented seated on a pedestal. The left leg is folded and the right leg is hanging down. On the left thigh of the image rests the left hand and the right hand is held in *abhaya mudra*. In the rear right and left hands the *Chakra* and *sankha* are respectively held. *Chanda* is depicted on the pedestal. The style of the image is to the Pallava-early Chalukyan period.

## viii. Dvarapalakas

There are three sets of Dvarakapalaka figures flanking the main Mahamandapa (north-ern and eastern) doorways. They are of varying heights ranging from 4'9" to 8'6". They are shown as standing at ease with one leg firmly held on the ground and the other foot across, as though they are resting the weight of their body partly on the mace which is on the floor. They have four hands. Both of them hold *chakra* and *saṅkha* in the upper right and left hands respectively. But the right has the *gada* in the left hand and its right hand is in *abhaya* pose. These are reversed in the figure. Both the images are shown with a number of ornaments. Their headgear is like *karandamakuta*.

The figures are thin and elegant. The workmanship is very fine and looks more like Kakatiya or early Vijayanagara period.

## ix. Garuda

Garuda who is affectionately called by the Srivaishnavas as *Garudalvar* or *periya-Tiruvadi* has his place directly opposite the presiding deity inside the temples. But here the Garuda shrine is outside the main unit of the temple near *Dhvajastambha*. The figure is about 3'6" high. Garuda here is depicted as standing with two hands in the *anjali* pose. Being the lord's mount, he is standing with outspread wings, always ready to carry him. He is shown with a roughly trefoiled halo behind and a low crown and is heavily decorated with ornaments. Stylistically this image appears to be of the 11-12 centuries A.D.

## x. Ramanuja

This stone image is identified as Ramanuja. The image is shown seated in *padmasana* and is about 3' high. Ramanuja is shown here as a Sanyasin with shaven head and holding his hands in the *anjali* pose. The earlobes are long and show a large split. He wears a *tulasi* garland, *yajnopavita* and a single large bangle, a little below the elbow on each of the forehands. Stylistically this belongs to the Vijayanagara period.

## B. Images in Lower Ahobilam

### i. Prahlada Varada-Narasimha

The image is in *sukhasana* pose with left leg folded while the right leg is dangling free. Lakshmi is seated on his left thigh. It has four hands, the lower hands are in *abhaya* and *varada mudras* and the upper hands are holding *chakra* and *sankha*. The image is about 4' high.

### ii. Amrutavalli - Tayar

This image depicts the consort of Prahlada Varada. The image is about 3'1" high. The goddess is shown as seated in *padmasana* and as having four arms. The lower two being in the *abhaya* and *varada mudras* and the rear hands carrying the lotusbud in each of them. There is a halo behind the head. She is richly decked with the *karanda-makuta* and other jewels. This is a beautiful image.

### iii. Andal

The image of Andal is 3'5" high and is standing in *sambhanga* on a high pedestal. The right hand is holding a *kalhara* flower and the left hand is in *tola* mudra. The hair is tied to a side.



#### iv. Images in the Kalyana mandapa

##### a. Balakrishna

Balakrishna<sup>6</sup> is depicted crawling with a ball of butter in his hand. The image is decked with varieties of ornaments. Stylistically this image appears to be of the late Vijayanagara period.

##### b. Venkataramana

The image is about 4' high. It is a standing image of Srinivasa on a pedestal and holds *Sankha* and *Chakra* in the upper hands, the lower right hand is in *Varada* mudra and the left in *katimudra*. The image appears to be of the late Vijayanagara period.

##### c. Panduranga

The image is about 3'8" high. It is in *samabhanga* and standing posture. It is two handed and both the hands are placed on *kati*. Stylistically the image belongs to the late Vijayanagara period.

##### d. Madhava

The image is about 3' high. The image stands in *samabhanga* on a pedestal. The god holds *Chakra* and *Sankha* in the upper right and left hands and the lower right holds *gada* and the left *padma*. This conforms to the *agamic* description of Madhava of the twenty four forms of Vishnu. Stylistically the image is of the early Vijayanagara period.

#### v. Rama and Sita

These stone images in the Ramalayam in the north-eastern corner of the temple. Inside the temple are the seated images of Rama and Sita, Lakshmana alone is standing. All the three figures are carved out of soapstone. Hanuman is in *anjalihasta* pose near the feet of Rama. Lakshmana is to the right of Rama and Sita is to Rama's left. Lakshmana is standing in *samabhanga* holding a bow and a quiver. Rama is keeping his right hand in *abhaya* posture and the left hand rests on his thigh. Sita holds a *nilotpala* flower in the left hand and the right hand kept in the *abhaya* posture. The images are fine and elegant. The presence of parabolic *prabhavali* without *kirtimukha* is interesting reminding us of the 10th-11th century images as in the Nolamba sculpture.

#### vi. Vishvakasena

The image is placed in a small room. It is about 2'5" in height and is depicted as seated. It has four hands with *Chakra* and *Sankha* in the upper right and left hands respectively and the lower right and left hands shown in *abhaya* and *jnana* mudra. The parabolic *prabhavali* reminds us of the 10th-11th century workmanship.

According to Srivaishnava tradition, Vishvakasena is the commander of the armies of Vishnu and, as such, occupies a place very near the main deity in the temple. Also in the *acharya* hierarchy of the Srivaishnavas, he is next only to Sri or Lakshmi. He is invoked by them at the beginning of the auspicious ceremonies. He is also the custodian of the personal effects of the Lord, and so, in important festivals, special worship is offered first to Him.

#### C. Metal Images

All the metal images in the temple are of bronze except the *snapanabera* which is made of silver.

#### 1. Karma-beras

In *agamic* ritualism associated with temples, a number of services and rituals are to be performed. All these are expected to be offered to the presiding deity of the temple. But the elaboration

of rituals probably made it necessary to provide substitutes for the main deity. While in some temples the rituals are performed the main deity installed in the *garbhagriha*, some of the temples have smaller images in bronze for use in connection with specific rituals. These bronze images called *karma-beras*. They may be one, three, five or six in a temple. There is only one *karma bera* in the Narasimha Svami temple, and it is the *snapan-bera*.

The *karma-beras* used for various purposes should correspond to a certain degree in posture and attitude to the main icon- if the main icon stands, the *karmabimba* stands; if the main icon sits, the *karmabimba* should also sit. However, if the main icon reclines, the *karmabimba* may be shown likewise but may be shown only standing or sitting. Further correspondences are to be noted in regard to the number of arms, and the specific weapons borne etc.

### ■ Snapan-bera

This is a small silver icon, about 9" high. This is always kept just at the foot of the *dhruva-bera* in the sanctum-sanctorum. This is used for purposes of offering daily bath to the god.

The image, as a *karma-bera* is to be, is iconographically a replica of the *mula-bera*, but is totally different. Stylistically, the icon is in *sambhanga*, and in standing posture holding *Chakra* and *Sankha* in upper hands, the lower right hand is in *abhaya mudra* and the left is holding *gada*. This may be of about the early-Vijayanagara period.

### iii. Ahobila-Narasimha

The processional deity of the Upper Ahobilam temple is placed in the Lower temple. Iconographically, this is not a replica of the *mula-bera*. This image is about 1'3" high including the pedestal which is about 8" in height. Iconographically this is an image of Narasimha with Lakshmi.

Narasimha is sitting with Lakshmi on his lap. It is four-handed having *Chakra* and *Sankha* in upper two hands and the lower right is in *abhaya* and the left is holding Lakshmi. Stylistically, this image appears to be of the early Vijayanagara type.

### iv. Lakshmi-Narasimha

Iconographically this is almost similar to the above icon. This icon is used as a processional image of Pavana-Narasimha. Stylistically the forms of *Sankha* and *Chakra*, the *kirita*, the mode of depiction of the hands and the face, the bulging chest, roundish face possibly indicate that this image may be slightly later than the above image.

### v. Jwala-narasimha

This icon is also placed along with the above bronzes. This is a processional image of Jwala-Narasimha. The processional image is a replica of the *mula-bera*, Jwala Narasimha, iconographically. The image is seated on a Garuda pedestal measuring 1'6" high. This image forms the central figure of a set, the other two being the images of Sri and Bhudevi which, like this, but are separate pieces. Sridevi is on his right and Bhudevi, on his left. They are in rhythmic *tribhanga* pose. The depiction of the image is tender and charming. These are about 1'3" in height. The forms of hand postures and *ayudhas*, the *kiritamakuta* of the god, the conical *karandamakuta* of the goddesses, fine workmanship etc. possibly suggest that this is similar stylistically to that of the Ahobila Narasimha (explained already). Hence, this may also belong to the 11th - 12th centuries A.D. bronze tradition.

### vi. Prahlada Varada Narasimha

This is identical with the *dhruvabera* of Prahlada-varada- Narasimha. Iconographically, this is totally different. This image is about 2'5" high and the pedestal is about 9" high. This processional

image is in *samabhanga*, standing posture and forms the central figure of a set, the other two being images of Sri and Bhudevi which flank but are separate pieces. Sridevi is to his right and Bhudevi, to his left. The flanking images of Sri and Bhudevi are in rhythmic *tribhanga* pose. The icons are very charming and elegant. These are about 2'5" in height. As the images are in worship access to them is permitted hence it is difficult to carry on a detailed study. However, the visible portion and its style possibly suggest the set of images belong to the Vijayanagara tradition, of about 14th to 15th centuries A.D.

#### vii. Vishvakshena

This is a beautiful bronze image of seated Vishvakshena, about 1'9" high. The iconographical features are identical with those in the stone image of Vishvakshena already described. Stylistically the forms of *Sankha* and *Chakra*, the mode of depiction of the hands and the face, the bulging chest, roundish face, and somewhat pointed nose possibly indicate that this image may be of the Vijayanagara period.

#### viii. Navaneetha Krishna

This image is also placed along with the other bronze icons. This is an image of Balakrishna standing and holding butter in the right hand. It is in dancing posture and the right leg is lifted. Stylistically this may be of the Vijayanagara period. This image is about 1'10" high.

#### ix. Chakratalavar

This image is about 1'8" in height. This deity, also called Sudarsana, is the personification of the discus, one of the weapons of Vishnu. This is the replica of the stone image installed in Upper Ahobilam. The representation of this in this temple is awe-inspiring and also bewitching. In outline, it is a *chakra* or circular frame with *jwala* or flames depicted. Within the large circle, there is the *shatkona* design made up of two interlacing equilateral triangles. In the centre of this is another smaller circle in which stands *Sudarsana* in his terrible aspect, his hair standing out in *jatas* plaits which are like the flames emanating from the god of fire. He has prominent tusks. He is depicted here with six hands, holding *chakra*, *ankusa* and *gada* in the right hands and *sankha*, *pasa* and *padma* in the left hands. On the back side there is no figure.

This is a beautiful image and in various respects its delineation looks almost like the processional image of Ahobala Narasimha image placed along with the bronze icons.

#### x. Alvars

The images of the Alvars are placed in a cell located, in between the *ardhamandapa* and *Mahamandapa* of the Lower Ahobilam temple. The bronze images of Ramanuja and Adivansatagopayati (the first *Jiyar* of Ahobila *math*) are placed along with the Alvars.

The image of Ramanuja is 1'4" in height, and iconographically this is a replica of the image.

The image of Adivansatagopayati is in standing posture, measuring 1'6" and holds the bronze icon of Lakshmi Narasimha (for details see chapter 3, P. 72).

Namunalavar (1'3" high) is shown as seated, displaying *Chinmudra* whereas Tirumangai (2'2" high), is standing holding a sword and a shield. All the other Alvars are about 1'8" high. All are shown as standing except the above Poygai, Pey, and Tirumalisai are with *anjali hasta*. Kulasekharavar a crowned monarch, has a *makuta* on his head and is with *anjali hasta* and is standing. Certain Brahmin saints have a small tuft of hair on the crown as in the case of Tondaradippodi,

Periyalvar and Madurkavi. Others ■■ shown with ■ bun of hair. Tiruppanalvar could easily be recognized by the cymbals he has in his hands.

The Alvar images here successfully display the spirit of complete surrender (*prapatti*) ■ God in their countenance and stance. These images may be of the Vijayanagara bronze tradition.

## 2. Non-Consecrated Sculptures

The temples often served as places of offering religious instruction as much as they served as places of worship. Many of the temples ran educational institutions themselves offering higher instruction in various aspects of religious love and devotion to the students. These students belonged mostly to the higher castes. But there was still a large section of the society like women folk and people belonging to various professional and other castes whose curiosity for knowing about their religion was also to be satisfied. This purpose was amply served by ■ number of depictions of gods and goddesses and themes from the puranas in various places in the temple. They served as illustrated religious books in stone. In order to serve this purpose well, there have been ■ number of sculptured pieces, some purely comic, ■ evoking curiosity, and ■ simply decorative adding attraction and beauty<sup>8</sup>.

In the Narasimha svami temple such a rich wealth of religious sculpture is to be seen carved in relief on ■ number of pillars set up in the *mahamandapa* and the different pillared corridors running round inside the *prakara* wall.

## 3. Sculpture on pillars and walls

### A. Upper Ahobilam

#### 1. The Mahamandapa and pillared corridor

A rich fare of sculptured representations of divine figures individuated and functioning in the different contexts of the epic literature is intermixed with or highlighted by secular motifs of dancing girls, flute-playing shepherds, squatting monkeys in Ajalihasta pose, fabulous figures of swan and ■ woman seated on fish. It is interesting enough to notice parallels in respects of attitude, aim and posture between the divine figures and secular persons. Scenes from the *Ramayana* representing and dramatising major events in the story of the hero are engraved with meticulous details. They include Lord Rama offering ■ ring as insignia to Hanuman commissioned with the task of searching out Lord Rama's abducted wife; Lord Hanuman meeting Sita under Asoka tree in the Asoka garden of Ravana, Lord Hanuman in the ambassadorial role seated ■ a higher level than that of the enemy, Ravana and such like incidents; Lord Krishna's figure taking handful of butter from ■ pot and Lord Krishna playing in flute, the individual figures drawn from the story of *Bhagavatha*; Lord Narasimha represented as pursuing his enemy Hiranyakasipu and tearing the abdomen of the enemy. They bring to the minds of the onlookers certain major hallowed and picturesque events in the lives of the protagonists of the two *epics* concerned.

Lord Hayagriva, Lord Dakshina Murthy, Lord Venkatesvara, Brahma the creator, Lord Bhairava and Lord Buddha have been individuated and represented to inspire ■ of piety in the minds of the worshippers belonging to different shades of Hindu religious philosophy. They bring together figures of Vaishnava mysticism and forms of manifestations of Shiva. As usual, floral designs, animal figures and fabled creatures are rendered with artistic grace in their miniature forms. Another striking feature of the artistic figures on the pillars is the sculptured representation of lions squatting ■ standing in different sizes. These figures recur in more or less similar forms in the other mandapas of the Upper Ahobilam. Yali type of pillars preponderate.

## II. North-West walls of the Mahamandapa

The outer wall of the northern side presents a series of sculptured engravings which are of considerable interest. As one walks along gazing at the figures, one is struck with the grace and tale-telling picturisations of scenes from *Narsimhavatara*, *Krishnavatara* and tribal life. If we concentrate on the first row of sculptured representations, we find Lord Narasimha being enthroned and fanned by attendants with fly-whisks, Narasimha tearing Hiranyakasipu's abdomen, *Kirtimukha* engraving, Lord Narasimha holding the terrified Chenchu Lakshmi and of particular interest is a pair of tribals in the pose of wooing. The picture lends itself to tribal motif on the surface level and the wooing of Chenchu Lakshmi by Narahari, at the cult level.

Of greater detail and number are a series of sculptured pieces representing Lord Krishna's childhood as described in *Bhagavatham*. Like a mortal child, Lord Krishna takes out a lump of butter from the churning pot as his mother churns milk.

The next scene is that of crawling Krishna, followed by Krishna in the act of stealing butter in a house of Gopika. On a complaint by the neighbours, the mother is shown to be punishing her son. Another scene represents Krishna in his naughty act of stealing the sarees of bathing gopikas. The bare gopikas are shown to be raising their hands praying to Krishna for their clothes. On the philosophical level, the Hindus view it as an act of absolute surrender to Krishna without any sense of ego.

The last row shows first the figure of Lord Krishna playing a flute, the second figure that of a tribal hunter carrying a hunted deer. The third figure is obviously that of Lord Vishnu in the *sthanaka* posture holding *sankha* and *chakra* in his two upper hands, while holding a mace in the lower left hand and the lower right hand held in *abhaya mudra*. However, this is followed by the figure of a bow-woman with her face turned back plucking out a thorn from her right foot. Soon we have the figure of Lord Vishnu reclining on Adishesha with his navel sprung out of his navel and seated on the lotus and two consorts at his feet. It is followed by another representation of the figure of Lord Vishnu. A pair of women obviously *Yakshinis* are carved out in their fabled version. The other scenes that follow in succession are those of women in an attitude of conversation and a nude figure. It climaxes with the figure of Lord Krishna taming the ferocious Kalinga serpent. The last carving is that of a human figure encircled by a floral design.

On the surface of the outer wall of the western side, figures delineating the tribal folk in various attitudes and contexts monopolise the sculptured scenes, with the singular exception of the figure of Lord Suryanarayana, the manifestation of Vishnu. The upper row of figures shows a tribal woman holding her child with her left hand and sweeping the floor with a broom. Another figure that of a woman seated in a *semi-yogic* posture on the fish. It is succeeded by an obviously shy figure with her body bare. The lower row starts with the figure of a tribal woman shooting her arrow backwards. This is followed by a Chenchu huntress with her bow in the left hand and her right hand holding an arrow pointing at the spot where she suffers from the thorn in the flesh. It is followed by a Chenchu surgeon removing the thorn with the pointed end of his arrow. The figure of Lord Suryanarayana crowns the succession of figures depicting the tribal folk. One notices the punctuation of these figures with the columns depicting artistic designs. Some details about the sculpture cannot be furnished as they have been so thickly white washed as not to be caught by the photo clearly enough.

### B. Lower Ahobilam

#### I. The Rangamandapa and other mandapas

The Ranga Mandapam consists of 82 pillars rich with artistic sculptures with the thematic motifs of the epics *Mahabharata* and the *Ramayana*. They illustrate very popular and key events in the two

epics which have formed part and parcel of the complex *Hindu religious, mythic, legendary and folk psyche*. They, ~~in~~ once, are ~~a~~ feast to the eye and inspired devotion required of a pilgrim ~~in~~ the holy shrine. They display the fabled figures, legendary motifs, tribal culture transfigured into divine mythology. The puranic motifs engraved on the ~~stone~~ pillars include the *Dasavatara*, a cycle of ten *avatara*s, engraved on the pillars in ~~the~~ northern mandapa.

The whole range of principal ~~events~~ connected with the *avatara* of Narasimha ~~has~~ found a series of finely chiselled and exquisitely carved figures graphically representing Lord ~~Narasimha~~ wooing Chenchu Lakshmi, Lord Narasimha with his ~~consort~~ on his lap, Lord Narasimha engaged in ~~a~~ duel with Hiranyakasipu, Lord Jwala Narsimha emerging out of the split pillar where upon he ~~was~~ the abdomen of Hiranyakasipu. Other prominent forms of Lakshmi Narasimha are those of Varaha Narasimha, Yoga Narasimha with and without His consort Lakshmi. *Yoga* is usually thought of as a union of the individual soul with ~~the~~ Cosmic Spirit. Such a union is envisioned ~~as~~ the culmination of worldly renunciation and spiritual enlightenment. ~~Here~~ Lord *Yoga Narasimha* is seated with his ~~consort~~ Lakshmi and this puzzles ~~and~~ engages our minds in the direction of spiritual quest. Lord Narasimha is also represented as a ~~guru~~ ~~in~~ a disciple. These figures highlight and intensify ~~the~~ Narasimha cult which is practised by the Srivaishnavas. They are inspired with the proper frame of mind ~~to~~ be attuned ~~to~~ achieve ~~the~~ *darshan* of Lord Lakshmi Narasimha's consecrated idol in ~~the~~ *garbhagriha*.






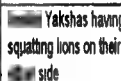

In the southern part of the Ranga Mandapa, pillars bear representations of gods, peculiar to *Srivaishnavism*. Lord Rama and Anjaneya are shown in *anjali*hasta pose and kneeling posture respectively. Lord Rama is said to have worshipped Lord Narasimha in the Lower Ahobilam. Another main deity of Srivaishnavas is Lord Venkateswara whose figure is carved in standing posture in ~~the~~ *abhaya* and *varadha* poses. Annamacharya, a prodigious composer of several kirthans describing the glory of Vishnu as Venkateswara, Narasimha and Rama is shown right under the right ~~side~~ of Lord Venkateswara.

However, in both the mandapas quite a good number of pillars bear figures representing *Yakshas*, *Gandharvas* and also fabled figures in the forms of ~~mythical~~ and *squatting lions* and celestial swans. Another category of figures of utmost artistic interest includes men and women figures variously as dancers, musicians and ~~artists~~ carved with telling detail and graphic attitude expressive of their artistic activities. Perhaps the artist's yearning for the graceful and attractive designs have been realised in ~~the~~ depiction of floral designs with geometrical precision and aesthetic charm. Another representation of unique charm and bewitching beauty is of a lady obviously *Minakshi* in ~~the~~ *Sukasana* pose. In her right hand, she has a flower and near her ~~left~~ hand holding a fruit ~~we~~ can see a parrot pecking at the fruit. The pillars by themselves have a unique structural design. They are neither ~~square~~ nor rectangular ~~but~~ are many- ~~sided~~ structures. Pillars with corbels bearing full-fledged *puspabodhigas* show the impress of ~~the~~ Vijayanagara style of sculpture. The *adhistanas* have bas-reliefs of elephants carved with a life-like grace. Almost similar figures ~~are~~ found in general over ~~the~~ surfaces of the pillars of *Kalyanamandapa* and other mandapas with some minor variations ~~in~~ detail and shape.














On ~~the~~ outer surface of the walls of ~~the~~ *Garbhagriha* and *Ardhamandapa* ~~a~~ panel of *Kshirasagaramardhana* by gods and ~~demons~~ and ~~other~~ panel depicting Lord Krishna on the hoods of *Kaliya* are carved in such nice detail ~~as~~ to arrest our eyes and captivate ~~our~~ minds.

# **RANGA MANDAPA : LOWER AHOBILAM**

South-North	Rows and Pillar No.	Location	Description of relief/ Sculptures			
			Eastern Side	Western Side	Northern Side	Southern Side
South-North	Row I Pillar No.1	Bottom	Yaksha figure in sitting posture holding a snake in left hand with two lions squatting on either side of yaksha	Seated lions in a row at the Base in a pose of supporting the pillars.	Squatting lion	Two lions in a row at the Base.
		Middle	One sub-pillar with ornamental design	one sub-pillar	one round sub-pillar	Two sub-pillars decorated with relief
		Top	Gandharva in the standing posture of a weight-lifter having a snake in the left hand	One Yaksha figure seated and the other in the erect posture	Yakshma having a sankha in his left hand	Two yakshas, one sitting and the other erect.
	Pillar No. 2	B	Damaged and unfinished	Seated lion	Damaged and unfinished	Yaksha with a lion on his either side.
		M	Damaged and unfinished	sub-pillar	Damaged and unfinished	Sub-pillar
		T	Damaged and unfinished	Damaged	Damaged and unfinished	Two sub-pillars.
	Pillar No. 3	B	Seated lion	pillar with a single pattern decoration	Floral design and partially damaged	Damaged
		M	One round supporting pillar	pillar with a single pattern decoration	Floral design and partially damaged	Damaged
		T	One round supporting pillar	pillar with a single pattern decoration	Floral design and partially damaged	Damaged


	Pillar No 4	B	Squatting lion	Plain pillar	Plain	Plain
		M	One sub-pillar	Plain pillar	Plain pillar	Plain pillar
		T	Two Small sub-pillars	Plain pillar	Plain pillar	plain pillar
	Pillar No 5	B	squatting lions  Yakshas 	Plain pillar	Plain pillar	plain pillar
		M	sub-pillar	Plain pillar	Plain pillar	Plain pillar
		T	Two Small sub-pillars	Plain pillar	Plain pillar	Plain pillar
	Pillar No 6	B	Squatting lion	Designed artistically	Floral design	Floral ornate design
		M	One sub-pillar	Creepers-like patterns	Floral design	Floral ornate design
		T	Two small sub-pillars	Creepers-like patterns	Floral design	Floral ornate design
	Pillar No 7	B	Squatting lion	Base	 engraving  creeper-like patterns	Floral engraving with creeper-like patterns
		M	Single sub-pillar	Standing Hanuman in Anjali Posture in niche	Floral engraving  creeper-like patterns	Floral engraving with creeper-like patterns
		T	Two small sub-pillars	Two sub-pillars	Floral engraving with creeper-like patterns	Floral engraving with creeper-like patterns
	Pillar No 8	B	Two Yaksha figures	Three squatting lions	 Yakshas having squatting lions on their side	Two Gandharva figures
		M	Single sub-pillar	Three sub-pillars	Three sub-pillars	Single sub-pillar
		T	Two sub-pillars	Three Yakshas	Seated Yakshas with musical instruments	Two sub-pillars
	II ROW pillar No 1	B	A  figure in sitting posture	lion figure in the sitting pose	Seated Yaksha with lions on either side	Yaksha with lions on either side



		M	Single round sub-pillar	Single sub-pillar	Single sub-pillar	Single sub-pillar
		T	Yaksha in a dancing Posture	Two small sub-pillars	Two small sub-pillars	A figure of Yaksha standing pose
Pillar No.2		B	A figure of Yaksha	Damaged	Damaged	Squatting lion
		M	Single sub-pillar decorated design	Damaged pillar	Damaged pillar	Squatting lion
		T	Two small sub-pillars	Damaged pillar	Damaged pillar	Single sub-pillar Two small sub pillars
Pillar No. 3		B	A lion in the upright posture supporting the pillar	Two  and two lions in a sitting position	 Yakshas with lions on either side	Three sub-pillars
		M	A lion in the upright posture supporting the pillar	sub-pillars	Three sub-pillars	Three sub-pillars
		T	Yakshas  standing posture	sub-pillars	 and  sub-pillars	Four small sub-pillars
 No 4		B	Yali Lion	Seated Yaksha with lion on either side	 Yaksha with  side	 Yakshas
		M	Yali Lion	Single sub-pillar	Two sub-pillars	Two sub-pillars
		T	A creeper like design	Single sub-pillar	Two  sub-pillars	Two small sub-pillars
Pillar No. 5		B	Yali Lion	Base	Portrait of a lady	Two figures of squatting 
		M	Yali Lion	Garuda sculpture	Noble with his wife, two sub-pillars	Two sub-pillars
		T	Yakshas in an erect posture	Yaksha in an erect posture	Two small sub-pillars	Two small sub-pillars
Pillar No.6		B	Yali Lion	Three squatting lions	Two seated yakshas	Three squatting 
		M	Yali lion	Three sub-pillars	three sub-pillars	Narasimha Svami as 



		T	Dancer	Two small sub-pillars and seated Yakshas	Three small sub-pillars	Yali Lion
	Pillar No. 7	B	A squatting lion	A squatting lion	A squatting lion	A squatting lion
		M	Round sub-pillars	Sub-pillar	Sub-pillar	Sub-pillar
		T	Two small sub-pillars	Two small sub-pillars	Sub-pillar	Sub-pillar
	Pillar No. 8	B	A seated Yaksha with a lion on either side	A seated Yaksha with a lion on either side	A seated Yaksha with a lion on either side	A seated Yaksha with a lion on either side
		M	Sub-pillars	Sub-pillars	Sub-pillars	Sub-pillars
		T	Two small sub-pillars	Two small sub-pillars	Two small sub-pillars	Two small sub-pillars
	III ROW Pillar No.1	B	Squatting lions	Squatting lions	Three squatting lions	Three squatting lions
		M	Yali lion	4 sub-pillars	Yali lions	A sub-pillar
		T	Plain	plain	plain	plain
	pillar No. 2	B	Base	Three squatting lions	Three lions squatting	A Yaksha having a snake in his left hand and lions on both sides
		M	Noble carrying whisk	4 sub pillars	Two sub-pillars	Three sub-pillars
		T	Hanuman in Kathasta pose	Vargas	Two small sub-pillars	Three small sub-pillars
	Pillar No. 3	B	Flower design	Seated Yakshas with lions on either side	Seated lion with Yakshas on either side	Seated lion with Yakshas on either side
		M	Rama in Anjali hasta mudra and carrying a bow	Single round sub-pillars	Two sub-pillars	Two sub-pillars
		T	Yaksha in a mirthful mood	Two small sub-pillars	Two small sub-pillars	Two sub-pillars
	Pillar No. 4	B	Yakshas with lions on either side	Squatting lions in a row	Yali lion	Seated Yakshas

		M	Two sub-pillars and Yali Lion	Two sub-pillars	Yali Lion	Yali Lion and sub-pillars
		T	Yakshas with a happy face and two small sub-pillars	Two small sub-pillars	Standing Yakshas	Seated yakshas
	Pillar No. 5	B	Plain base	Plain base	Plain base	Plain base
		M	monkey in a jumping posture	Two lions ■ two sub-pillars	Two lions above two ■	A man having a snake in the right hand
		T	Hanuman in three different postures	Floral design	Floral design	Hanuman holding a gada.
	Pillar No. 6	B	Plain base	Plain base	Plain base	Plain base
		M	A Man holding ■ snake in the right hand	Two lions	Dvarapalaka	Two lions
		T	Danseur	Some designs	Plain	Two small sub-pillars
	Pillar No. 7	B	Seated yaksha with lions on either side	Yakshas dancing having lions on both side	Two sub-pillars	Creaper design pattern
		M	Two sub-pillars	Two sub-pillars	Two sub-pillars and Yali Lion	Yali Lion
		T	■ small sub-pillars and three Yakshas in mirthful mood	Two small sub-pillars	Two sub-pillars	Standing Yakshas
	Pillar No. 8	B	Base	Squatting lion	Seated Yakshas with lions on either ■	■ squatting lions
		M	Yoga Narasimha Svami with the Yoga patta wound ■ his knees with Lakshmi seated on his thigh ■ is a unique figure ■ Yoga Lakshmi Narasimha Svami, as Yoga figures are normally sculptured without consort	Single round sub-pillar	Two sub-pillars	Two sub-pillars

		T	Seated Yakshas	Two small sub-pillars	Two small sub-pillars	Two sub-pillars
	Pillar No.9	B	Base	4 squatting lions	A row of lions	3 squatting lions
		M	 Narasimha wooing Chenchu Lakshmi	4 sub-pillars	4 sub-pillars	4 sub-pillars
		T	Squatting Yakshas	Yakshas in a mirthful mood	Yakshas in a mirthful mood	Two small sub-pillars
	Pillar No. 10	B	Squatting Yakshas with a lion on either side	4 squatting lions	Squatting lions in a row	Two seated Yakshas
		M	Two sub-pillars	4 sub-pillars	4 sub-pillars	Two sub-pillars and yali lion
		T	Two small sub-pillars and two Yakshas	Yakshas in a happy mood	Yakshas in a mirthful mood	Two small sub-pillars and above a pregnant lady giving birth to a child.
	IV ROW Pillar No.1	B	3 Squatting lions		Base	Base
		M	Two sub-pillars		A sculptured piece of Arjaneya in kneeling posture with an expression of calm devotion on the face. The figure is slightly mutilated	A lion in the upright posture supporting the pillar
		T			Yaksha's figure	One Yaksha in standing pose
	IV ROW Pillar No.2	B	Yali Lion	Base	Base	Base
		M	Yali Lion	Dvarapalaka	Yali lion	Dvarapalaka
		T	Plain	Floral design	Small pillars	Seated Narasimha figure
	Pillar No.3	B	Plain Base	Thriptam	Thriptam	Plain Base
		M	Yali lion	A figure of Dvarapalaka	A figure of Vishnu partially damaged	Yali lion

		T	Floral design	Some designs	A figure of seated Narasimha Svami	Some design
Pillar No. 4	B		Garuda figure in upright posture with Anjali hasta	Plain pillar	Plain pillar	Plain pillar
	M		Lord Venkateswara with Annamacharya on his right side	Vargas	Plain pillar	Plain pillar
Pillar No. 5	B		Plain base	Plain base	Plain base	Plain base
	M		Common figures	Single sub-pillar	Dancing figure	Danseur
	T		A figure of Mastya Kanya	Plain	Vargas	Seated Lakshmi Devi
Pillar No. 6	B		Plain base	Plain base	Plain base	Plain base
	M		Figure of Lord Satyanarayana	Two sub-pillars	Dvarapalaka	Two sub-pillars
	T		A figure of swan	Vargas	A figure of Balakrishna	Vargas
Pillar No. 7	B		Seated Yaksha with lions on either side	Seated Yaksha with lions on either side	Base	Yali lion
	M		Two sub-pillars	Two sub-pillars	Figure of Lakshmi Varaha Narasimha Svami with the Chakra in his right hand and Conch in the upper left hand with Lakshmi seated on his thigh. She is holding a flower in her right hand	Top, squatting Yaksha
	T				Two sub-pillars	
Pillar No. 8	B		Plain Base	Three lined Nama	Plain Base	Three lined Nama
	M		A hunter and a swan	Dvarapalaka	Soldier	A figure of Lord Venkateswara

		T	Lotus	Man holding two Kamalams in two hands	Man seated on a fish	III figure of Tandava Krishna
	Pillar No.9	B	Plain base	Three lined Nama	Three lined Nama	Plain base
		M	Man blowing bugle	A figure of Prahlada in Anjali hasta pose	A figure of Garuda in Anjali hasta pose	Seated man and Balu Krishna
		T	Hanuman in standing posture	A dancing lady	III figure of Yoga Narasimha and Rajahamsa	Hanuman in running posture
	Pillar No. 10	B	Yaksha with lions on either side		Yali lion	Base
		M	Two sub-pillars	A dancing lady	Yali lion	A common figure
		T	Two small sub-pillars	A dancing lady	Vargas	Vargas
S-N	V ROW Pillar No. 1	B	Squatting Yakshas with lions on either side	Squatting lions in a row	Base	Base
		M	Two sub-pillars	Two sub-pillars	Hanuman image mutilated	Yali Lion
		T	Two small sub-pillars	Two sub-pillars	Standing Yaksha	Damaged figure
	Pillar No. 2	B	Three ornamental blocks of stones as base	Plain base	Plain base	Three ornamental blocks of stone as base
		M	A figure of Lord Venkatesvara	Yali Lion	Yali Lion	Dvarapalaka
		T	A figure of Yoga Narasimha	Floral design	Floral design	Seated Vishnu
	Pillar No.3	B	Three ornamental blocks of stone as base	Plain base	Three ornamental blocks of stone as base	Plain base
		M	A figure of Dvarapalaka	Yali lion	A figure of Dvarapalaka	Yali Lion
		T	Defaced figure	Floral design	Seated Vishnu	Floral design



Pillar No. 4	B	Squatting Yaksha with lions on either side	Figure of Yaksha with lions on either side	Base	Base
	M	Two sub-pillars	Two sub-pillars	Yali Lion	Seated Minakshi. It is a unique sculpture of a Devi perhaps the most beautiful sculpture in this temple in the Sukasana pose.
	T	Two small sub-pillars	Two sub-pillars	Floral design	Two sub-pillars
Pillar No. 5	B	Plain base	Plain base	Plain base	Plain base
	M	Yali Lion	Danseur	Yali Lion	A figure holding a snake in the  pose.
	T	Design of a creeper pattern	Squatting monkey	Plain	Dhyana Buddha
Pillar No. 6	B	Plain base	Plain base	Plain base	Plain base
	M	A figure of Arjaneya	Yali lion	A figure of Hanuman	Yali lion
	T	Floral design	Floral design	Flower bud design	Ornamental design
Pillar No. 7	B	Seated Yakshas with lions on either side	Seated Yakshas with lions on either side	Base	Base
	M	Two sub-pillars	Two sub-pillars	Figure of Yoga Narasimha Svami with the Yoga patta wound round his knees.	Yali lion
	T	Two small sub-pillars	Two small sub-pillars	The figure has four arms, Top, floral design	Squatting Yakshas in a row
Pillar No. 8	B	Three  blocks of stone as Base	Plain base	Plain base	Three-lined Narma
	M	A figure of a Chenchu woman	women holding a parrot	A Chenchu woman holding a bow and arrows	A dancing artist with percussion instrument in his hands.

		T	Danseur	Dancing women	Hamsa Vari (Half-women, half-swan)	A figure of Bhu-Varaha.
Pillar No. 9	B		Three-Lined Nama	Plain base	Three-lined Nama and figure of <del>the</del>	Plain base
		M	A figure of Dvarapalakas and Lakshmi Narayana	The figure of Vamana Avatara with the grace of celibacy aglow on his face.	A figure of Ganesa	God holding two padmas and another figure holding Santha, Chakra (Like Vishnu).
		T	A figure of Kurmavataaram	A women holding a whisk	A figure of Varaha-vatara	T. The figure of Matsya Avatara
Pillar No. 10	B		Seated Yakshas with lions on either side	Seated Yakshas with lions on either side	Yali Lion	Base
		M	Two sub-pillars	A women holding a whisk	Yali Lion	A figure of Lord Narasimha, persuing Hiranyakasipu after emerging out of pillar.
		T	Two small sub-pillars	A women holding a whisk	Yakshas in standing pose	Yakshas in standing position.
ROW VI Pillar No. 1	B		Squatting lions	A group of dancing Rishis	A figure in Arjali hasta posture	Plain base
		M	Two sub-pillars	Two sub-pillars	Seated figure	Yali lion
		T	Two small sub-pillars	Pilasters	Yakshas	Seated Yakshas
Pillar No. 2	B		Seated Yakshas	Base	Seated Yakshas holding a snake in left hand and lions on either side	Yakshas in a row with lions on either side.
		M	4 sub-pillars	A mutilated image of a devotee	Seated Yakshas holding a snake in left hand with lions on either side, pilasters	pilasters
		T	Two Yakshas in a happy mood	Unfinished figure	Pilasters	Pilasters



	Pillar No. 3	B	Squatting lions	Base	Yakshas with lion on either side	
		M	One sub-pillar	A bracket figure of nobles carrying the whisk and the chemara for the Lord	Two sub-pillars	Two sub-pillars
		T	Two small sub-pillars	Yakshas	Pilasters	
	Pillar No. 4	B	Yakshas with lions on either side	Yakshas with lions on either side	Base	Base
		M	Two sub-pillars		Yali lion	Yali lion
		T	Pilasters		Two Yakshas	Seated Yakshas
	Pillar No. 5	B	Plain base	Plain base	Plain base	Plain base
		M	Yali Lion	A dancing woman	Yali Lion	Man holding a snake
		T	Ornamental design	Lion in standing pose	Ornamental design	Squatting lions
	ROW VI Pillar No. 6	B	Plain base	Plain base	Plain base	Plain base
		M	Yali Lion	A man holding bugle	Squatting lions and a swan	Yali Lion
		T	Base	Danseur	Ornamental design	Base
	Pillar No. 7	B	Seated Yakshas holding a snake in the left hand and with lions on either side	Yali Lion	Yali Lion	Yali Lion
		M	Two round sub-pillars	Yali Lion	Yali Lion	Yali Lion
		T	Pilasters	Yakshas in a happy mood	Two sub-pillars and one Yaksha holding a drum	Yaksha in standing pose
	Pillar No. 8	B	Squatting lions	Base	lion with Yakshas on either side	Yakshas
		M	One round sub-pillar	A figure of Lakshmi Narasimha Murthi	Two sub-pillars	Two sub-pillars

		T	Pilasters	Yakshas in a mirthful mood	Two small sub-pillars	Pilasters
S-N	ROW VI Pillar No. 9	B	Squatting lions with Yakshas	Base	A lion with Yaksha on either side	Squatting lions
		M	A sub-pillars	Jwala Narasimha	Four-pillars	Two sub-pillars
		T	Pilasters	Ornamental design	Pilasters	Pilasters
	Pillar No. 10	B	Four seated Yakshas with one lion	4 Seated Yakshas	4 seated Yakshas with one lion	Four seated Yakshas with one lion
		M	7 small sub-pillars	4 sub-pillars	6 sub-pillars	6 sub-pillars
		T	4 small sub-pillar	Two sub-pillars and Yakshas	Two small sub-pillars and two seated Yakshas	Two small sub-pillars and two seated Yakshas
	ROW VII Pillar No. 1	B	A figure of Anjanaya with Anjalihasta pose	A man in sitting position holding a snake in right hand with lions on either side.	A man in meditation	Unfinished
		M	Unfinished	One sub-pillar	One sub-pillar	sub-pillar
		T	Unfinished	Design	A man in standing pose	Unfinished
	Pillar No. 2	B	Squatting lion	Squatting lion	A squatting lion	Squatting lion
		M	Single round sub-pillar	Single round pillar	Single round pillar	Single round pillar
		T	Pilasters	Two sub-pillars	Two sub-pillars	Pilasters
	Pillar No. 3	B	Base	Base	Base	Purnakalasa
		M	Yali lion and Three sub-pillars	Yali Lion and Three sub-pillars	Figure of Sri Ranga Raya I of Penukonda	11 sub-pillars
		T	Yakshas in a Joyous mood	Yakshas in a Joyous mood	Narasimha figure	Figure of Gaja Lakshmi
	Pillar No. 4	B	Plain base	Plain base	Plain base	Plain base

		M	Yali Lion	Hanuman in erect pose	Yali Lion	A boy playing
		T	Ornamental design	Danseur	Plain	Seated woman
Pillar No. 5		B	Plain base	Plain base	Plain base	Plain base
		M	Yali Lion	Hanuman in running posture	lions in standing position	Yali Lion
		T	Ornamental design	A seated man holding flowers in two hands	A man holding an arrow	Floral design
Pillar No. II		B	Two seated Yakshas with three lions	Two  with three lions	three seated Yakshas with a lion	Base
		M	Yali Lion and	Two sub-pillars	Six small sub-pillars	Noble man
		T	Vargas	Vargas	Divisions	Divisions
Pillar No. 7		B	Seated Yakshas	Seated Yakshas	Seated Yakshas	Seated Yakshas
		M	One sub-pillar	One sub-pillar	One sub-pillar	One sub-pillar
		T	Pilasters	Pilasters	Pilasters	Pilasters
Pillar No. 8		B	Squatting lions	Squatting lions	Squatting lions	Squatting lions
		M	One sub pillar	One sub-pillar	One sub-pillar	One sub-pillar
ROWS VIII Pillar No. I		B	3 seated Yakshas with lions	Seated Yaksha holding a snake	Plain base	3 seated Yakshas with lions
		M	Three sub-pillars	■ figure ■ Anjaneya in Anjali hasta pose	One sub-pillar	3 sub-pillars
		T		Two small sub-pillars	3 seated Yakshas	
Pillar No. 2		B	Plain base	Plain base	Plain base	Plain base
		M	Two sub-pillars	Dvarapalaka and seated Lakshmi Devi	Two sub-pillars	Dvarapalaka and Rama blessing Anjaneya

		T	Yali Lion	A figure of Narasimha Svami	Yali Lion	Narasimha Svami
	Pillar No. II	B	Seated Yakshas with lions on either side	Seated Yakshas with lions on either side	Plain Base	Seated Yakshas with lions on either side
		M	Two sub-pillars	Two sub-pillars	A figure of Danseur with Pavada (Skirt). This figure has several gajalu (anklets) on her ankles which are worth noticing	One small pillar
	Pillar No. 4	B	Plain base	Plain base	Plain base	Plain base
		M	Yali Lion	A seated man holding a flower in right hand and Rajahansa	Yali Lion	A figure of Arjaneya carrying the Sanjeevini Parvatam in the left hand
		T	Ornamental design	Floral design	Vargas	A seated woman
	Pillar No. 5	B	Plain base	Plain base	Plain base	Plain base
		M	Yali Lion	Rajahansa	Squatting lions and Tandava Krishna (Dancing Lord Krishna on the hoods of Kalinga)	Floral design
		T	Ornamental design	A man in a standing pose	A seated man	
	Pillar No. 6	B	Seated Yakshas with lions on either side	Seated Yakshas with lions on either side	Base	Seated Yakshas
		M	Two sub-pillars	Two sub-pillars	A Danseur of 3 feet high. She must have been a court dancer.	One sub-pillar
		T	Pilasters	Pilasters	Seated Yakshas	Pilasters
	Pillar No. 7	B	Base	Floral design	Base	Squatting lions
		M	Three sub-pillars	Two sub-pillars	One sub-pillar	One sub-pillar


		T	3 small sub-pillars	Two small sub-pillars	Floral design	Two sub-pillars
	Pillar No. 8	B	Squatting lions	Seated Yaksha lions on either side	3 squatting lions	Seated Yaksha with lions on either
		M	Three sub-pillars	Two sub-pillars	One sub-pillar	One sub-pillar
		T	3 small sub-pillars	Two small sub-pillars	Floral design	Two sub-pillars
	ROW IX Pillar No. 1	B	lion with on either side	3 squatting lions	A Yaksha	
		M	3 sub-pillars	One sub-pillar	Onesub-pillar	3 sub-pillars
		T	3 Yakshas in a Joyous mood	Two small sub-pillars	Two small sub-pillars (Rama giving ring to Hanuman as his insignia to Sita)	Yakshas in a Joyous mood.
	No. 2	B	Three squatting lions Yakshas on side	Base	Base	Two seated
		M	4 sub-pillars	One sub-pillar	Man with cymbals in his hand in the pose participating in a Bhajan	Two sub-pillars
		T	Two sub-pillars and a Yali lion	Floral design	Seated Yaksha	One seated Yaksha
	Pillar No. 3	B	Plain base	Plain base	Plain base	Plain base
		M	Women holding a creeper (Latha) and figure Rajahamsa	Two sub-pillars	One sub-pillar	Yali Lion
		T	Squatting lions	Floral design	Floral design	Squatting lions
	Pillar No. 4	B	Plain Base	Plain Base	Plain Base	Plain Base
		M	Squatting lions	sub-pillar	Yali lion	Two small pillars

		T	Padmam (Lotus)	Floral design	A figure ■ Seshasayana Murthy	Squatting lions
	Pillar No. 5	B	Three lions with three Yakshas	Seated Yaksha	Yakshas in a joyous mood	Base
		M	Three sub-pillars	Two sub-pillars	3 sub-pillars	A man playing ■ the <del>musical</del>
		T	Seated Yaksha	Two small sub-pillars	One Yaksha	Seated Yaksha
	Pillar No. 6	B	Seated Yakshas	Three Yakshas in a joyous mood	Yakshas in a Joyous mood	Seated Yaksha
		M	Four sub-pillars	One sub-pillar	Three sub-pillars	One sub-pillar
		T	Yakshas in a joyous mood	2 small sub-pillars	Two Yakshas and lions in a happy mood.	Two small sub-pillars.
	ROW X Pillar No. 1	B	Seated Yakshas	A figure of ■ woman in Anjalihasta pose	Yakshas in a joyous mood	Yakshas in a joyous mood
		M	Four sub-pillars	Three sub-pillars	sub-pillars and Yali Lion	Four sub-pillars
		T	Two Yakshas	Two sub-pillars	Yakshas	Seated Yakshas
	Pillar No. 2	B	Yali Lion	Plain base	Plain base	Seated Yakshas
		M	Yali Lion	A common minstrel	2 sub-pillars	Two sub-pillars
		T	Plain	Yakshas	Pilasters	Two small sub-pillars
	Pillar No.3	B	Yali ■	Base	Seated Yakshas	One seated Yaksha
		M	Yali Lion	A common Minstrel	2 sub-pillars	Two sub-pillars
		T	Plain	Yaksha in a standing pose	2 small sub-pillars	Two small sub-pillars
	Pillar No. 4	B	A squatting lion	Base	Base	Base
		M	4 sub-pillars	Yali lion	4 sub-pillars	Yali lion

		T	Four seated Yakshas	Plain	Yakshas in a Joyous mood	Plain
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Note . B - denotes Bottom, M - denotes Middle, T- denotes Top

# SCULPTURES ON MAHAMANDAPAM AND PILLARED CORRIDOR : UPPER AHOBILAM

East-West	Row and Pillar No.	Location	Description of Relief Sculptures			
			E	W	N	S
E-W	1 ROW Pillar No. 1	B	Plain base	Plain base	Plain base	Plain base
		M	Pillar vargam	A flower within a circular design	Some letters undeciphered	Plain
		T	Bodhiga	Bodhiga	Bodhiga	Bodhiga
	Pillar No. 2	B	Plain base	Plain base	Lion	Plain
		M	A flower design	A flower design	Sub-pillar	Plain
		T	Bodhiga	Bodhiga	Bodhiga	Bodhiga
	Pillar No. 3	B	Plain	A figure of Krishna playing flute against the background of sylvan pomp	Lion base	A floral design
		M	Floral design	A floral design	Sub-pillar	Buddha in an attitude of meditation
		T	Bodhiga	Bodhiga	Bodhiga	Bodhiga
	Pillar No. 4	B	Creeper design	Shepherd on a platform	Lion base	Plain
		M	A flower in a circle	Swan in a circle design	Sub-pillar	A floral design
		T		Bodhiga	Bodhiga	Bodhiga



	Pillar No. 5	B	A comely figure of a beautiful woman releasing arrow with her face turned back	Lord Chenna Kesava on a raised platform	Lion base	Plain base
		M	Lotus in a circle	Two lotuses	sub-pillar	Two lotuses
		T	Bodhiga	Bodhiga	Bodhiga	Bodhiga
	Pillar No. 6	B	Lord Venkatesvara on a raised plat form	Base	Lion base	Base
		M	Creepers design	A dancing boy	Sub-pillar	Two lotuses
		T	Bodhiga	Bodhiga	Plain Bodhiga	Bodhiga
	Pillar No. 7	B	A graceful figure of Dancing Krishna	A Dancer on a platform	Lion base	Base
		M	A figure of swan in a circle	Lotus in a circle	Sub-pillar	Lotus in a circle
		T	Bodhiga	Bodhiga	Plain Bodhiga	Bodhiga
	Pillar No. 8	B	Base	A shepherd holding a flute	A shepherd holding a flute	Base
		M	A design in a circle	A flower in a circle	A flower in a circle	A flower design
		T	Bodhiga	Bodhiga	lion	Bodhiga
	Pillar No. 9	B	Base	A Shepherd holding a flute	Lion base	Base
		M	Round Circle	Flower design	Sub-pillar	A flower design
		T	Bodhiga	Bodhiga	Plain Bodhiga	Bodhiga
	Pillar No. 10	B	Base	Base	Base	Base
		M	Lotus in a circle	pillar division	Floral design	A floral design
		T	Plain bodhiga	Plain bodhiga	Plain bodhiga	Plain bodhiga

	ROW II Pillar No. 1	B	Base	Base	Base	Base
		M	A flower design	A decorative floral design	A floral design	Pillar designed
		T	Plain Bodhiga	Plain Bodhiga	Plain Bodhiga	Plain Bodhiga
	Pillar No. 2	B	Base	Base	Base	Base
		M	Plain	Plain	Plain	Plain
		T	Bodhiga	Bodhiga	Bodhiga	Bodhiga
	Pillar No. 3	B	Base	A Man holding a circular musical instrument	Lord Anjaneya holding creepers and standing on a platform	Lord Anjaneya standing on a platform
		M	Plain	A floral design	A floral design	A floral design
		T	Bodhiga	Bodhiga	Bodhiga	Bodhiga
	Pillar No. 4	B	Base	Base	Lord Hanuma and Lord Garuda face to face	Base
		M	monkey	A flower design	Plain	A floral design
		T	Bodhiga	Bodhiga	Bodhiga	Bodhiga
	Pillar No. 5	B	Base	Base	Base	Base
		M	Dancing Anjaneya	Two flowers	Round Lotus	Round flower
		T	Bodhiga	Bodhiga	Plain	Bodhiga
	Pillar No. 6	B	Base	Base	Base	Base

		M	Swan in the circular design	Flower design	Half-man-half swan	Flower design
		T	Bodhiga	Bodhiga	Bodhiga	Bodhiga
	Pillar No. 7	B	Lord Arjaneya with one raised Arm	Base	Base	Base
		M	Lotus	A flower	A floral design	Plain
		T	Bodhiga	Bodhiga	Bodhiga	Bodhiga
	Pillar No. 8	B	Base	Base	Base	Base
		M	Plain	Plain	Plain	Plain
		T	Bodhiga	Bodhiga	Bodhiga	Bodhiga
	Pillar No. 9	B	Base	Base	Base	Base
		M	Flowers	Flowers	Plain	Plain
		T	Bodhiga	Bodhiga	Bodhiga	Bodhiga
	Pillar No. 10	B	Base	Base	Base	Base
		M	Plain	A flower	A flower	A flower
		T	Bodhiga	Bodhiga	Bodhiga	Bodhiga
	ROW III Pillar No. 1	B	Base	A troop of Dancers on a platform	Base	Base
		M	A flower	A flower	A flower	Floral design
		T	Bodhiga	Bodhiga	Bodhiga	Bodhiga
	Pillar No. 2	B	Base	Base	Base	Base

		M	Flower	Flower	A flower	A floral design
		T	Bodhiga	Bodhiga	Bodhiga	Bodhiga
	Pillar No. 2	B	Base	Base	Base	Base
		M	A flower	Flower	A flower	A floral design
		T	Bodhiga	Bodhiga	Bodhiga	Bodhiga
	Pillar No. 9	B	Base	Base	Base	Base
		M	Plain	Plain	Plain	Plain
		T	Bodhiga	Bodhiga	Bodhiga	Bodhiga
	Pillar No. 10	B	Lord Garuda on a Platform	Base	Base	Base
		M	A flower design	Plain	swan	design
		T	Bodhiga	Plain Bodhiga	Bodhiga	Bodhiga
	ROW IV Pillar No. 1	B	Base	Base	Base	Base
		M	Plain	Plain	A flower	Plain
		T	Bodhiga	Bodhiga	Bodhiga	Bodhiga
	Pillar No. 2	B	Base	Base	Base	Base
		M	Plain	Plain	Plain	Plain
		T	Bodhiga	Bodhiga	Bodhiga	Bodhiga
	Pillar No.3	B	Inside the wall	Inside the wall	Inside the wall	Inside the wall
		M	Inside the wall	Inside the wall	Inside the wall	Inside the wall

		T	Inside the wall	Inside the wall	Inside the wall	Inside the wall
	Pillar No. 4	B	Base	Base	Base	Base
		M	Lotus	Lotus	Lotus	Lotus
		T	Bodhiga	Bodhiga	Bodhiga	Bodhiga
	Pillar No. 5	B	Rama taking aim with his bow and arrow and Lakshmana by his side	Vall in his last moments, while Rama and Lakshmana and Vall's wife look on.	Group of dancing monkeys	A scene of Rama giving his ring as insignia to Anjaneya
		M	Rama and Lakshmana	A group of monkeys in Anjali hasta pose	Monkeys in Anjali hasta pose	Anjaneya in Anjali hasta pose as Rama and Lakshmana are seated
		T	Bodhiga	Bodhiga	Bodhiga	Bodhiga
	Pillar No. 6	B	Hanuman touching the feet of Rama on a platform	A Man in a meditation posture	Base	Two dancing Women
		M	Seated Sita and Hanuman standing before her under Ashoka tree.	Hanuman in Anjali hasta pose	Lord Hanuman seated at a higher level than Ravana on his throne in the latter's Darbar.	Seated Sita
		T	Bodhiga	Bodhiga	Bodhiga	Bodhiga
	Pillar No. 7	B	Base	Base	Base	Base
		M	Plain	Plain	Plain	Plain
		T	Bodhiga	Bodhiga	Bodhiga	Bodhiga

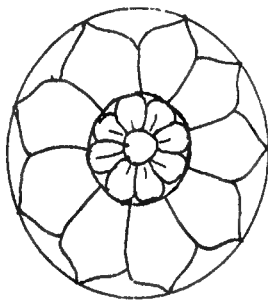
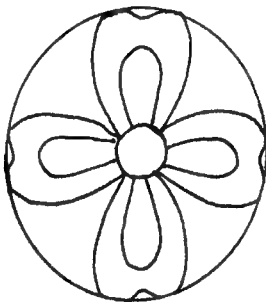
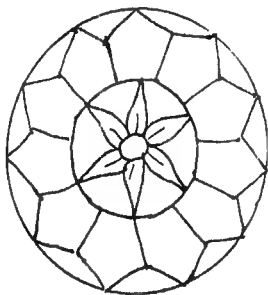
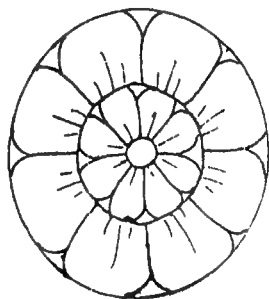
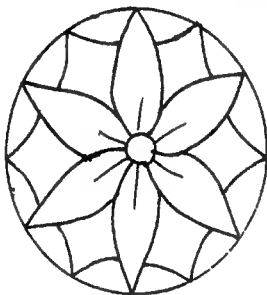
	Pillar No. 8	B	Inside the Wall	Inside the Wall	Inside the Wall	Inside the Wall
		M	Inside the Wall	Inside the Wall	Inside the Wall	Inside the Wall
		T	Inside the Wall	Inside the Wall	Inside the Wall	Inside the Wall
	Pillar No. 9	B	Dancing women on a platform	Base	Base	Base
		M	A group of dancing monkeys	Plain	Plain	Plain
		T	Bothiga	Bothiga	Bothiga	Bothiga
	Pillar No. 10	B	Base	Base	Base	Base
		M	Plain	Plain	Plain	Plain
		T	Bothiga	Bothiga	Bothiga	Bothiga
	ROW V Pillar 11	B	the Wall	Inside the Wall	Inside the Wall	Inside the Wall
		M	Inside the Wall	Inside the Wall	Inside the Wall	Inside the Wall
		T	Inside the Wall	Inside the Wall	Inside the Wall	Inside the Wall
	Pillar No. 2	B	Inside the Wall	Inside the Wall	Inside the Wall	Inside the Wall
		M	Inside the Wall	Inside the Wall	Inside the Wall	Inside the Wall
		T	Inside the Wall	Inside the Wall	Inside the Wall	Inside the Wall
	Pillar No. 3	B	Inside the Wall	Inside the Wall	Inside the Wall	Inside the Wall
		M	Inside the Wall	Inside the Wall	Inside the Wall	Inside the Wall
		T	Inside the Wall	Inside the Wall	Inside the Wall	Inside the Wall
	Pillar No. 4	B	Base	Base	Base	Base

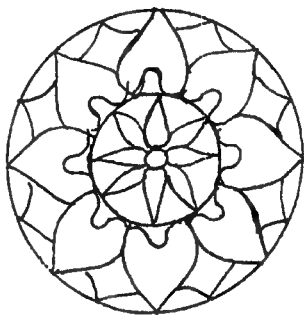
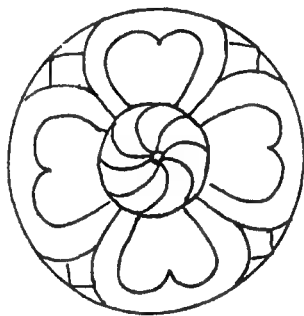
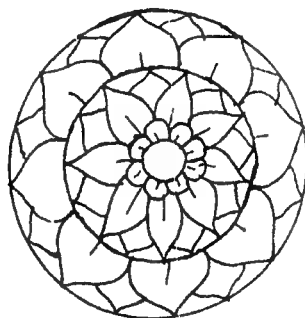
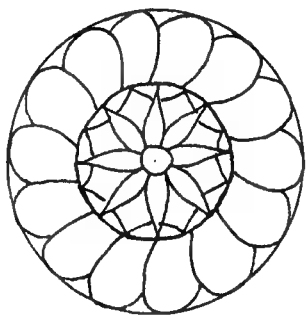
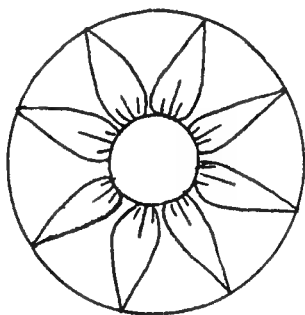
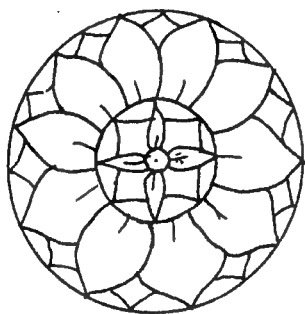
		M	Plain	Plain	Plain	Plain
		T	Bodhiga	Bodhiga	Bodhiga	Bodhiga
	Pillar No. 5	B	Lord Narasimha tearing the abdomen of Hiriyakasipu	Brahma seated on a platform	Lord Narasimha and Hiriyakasipu engaged in duel	Lord Krishna standing on a raised platform.
		M	Lord Venkatesvaru	A figure of Murthy	Lord Krishna eating butter off a pot	Lord Krishna and Lord Garuda engaged in a fight
		T	Bodhiga	Bodhiga	Bodhiga	Bodhiga
	Pillar No. 6	B	A figure of seated vigneswara on a platform	Seated Lord Venkateswara	Lord Hayagreeva with his consort Lakshmi on his lap.	A figure of Lord Bairava Holding a trident and a damara.
		M	A figure of women seated on a fish supposed to hold the clue to a hidden	A dancing lady	A Chenchu couple	Buddha in Yogic posture
		T	Bodhiga	Bodhiga	Bodhiga	Bodhiga
	Pillar No. 7	B	Base	Base	Base	Base
		M	Plain	Plain	Plain	Plain
		T	Bodhiga	Bodhiga	Bodhiga	Bodhiga
	Pillar No. 8	B	Pillar inside the Wall	Pillar inside the Wall	Pillar inside the Wall	Pillar inside the Wall
		M	inside the Wall	inside the Wall	Pillar inside the Wall	Pillar inside the Wall
		T	Pillar inside the Wall	Pillar inside the Wall	inside the Wall	Pillar inside the Wall
	Pillar No. 9	B	Base	Base	Base	Base

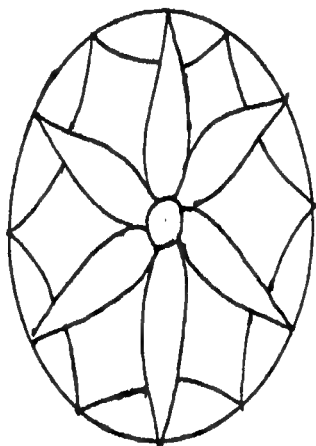
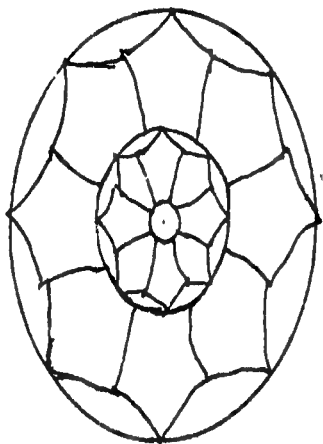
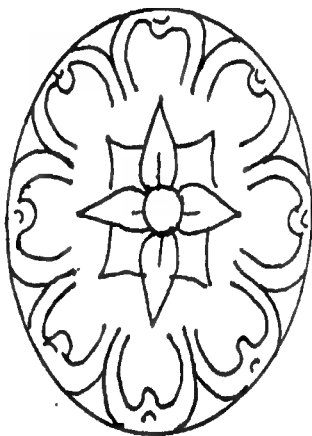
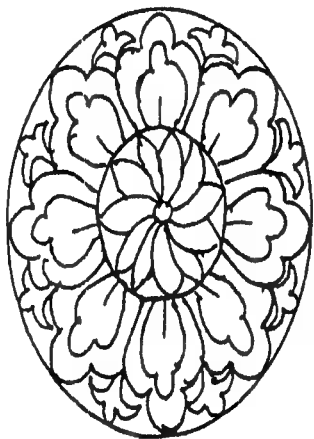
		M	Plain	Plain	Plain	Plain
		T	Bodhiga	Bodhiga	Bodhiga	Bodhiga
	Pillar No. 10	B	Base	Base	Base	Base
		M	Plain	Plain	Plain	Plain
		T	Bodhiga	Bodhiga	Bodhiga	Bodhiga



GEOMETRICAL DESIGNS USED IN THE MAHAMANDAPA (PILLARED CORRIDOR)  
UPPER AHOBILAM







## DAILY WORSHIP AND SPECIAL FESTIVALS (NITYA - NAIMITHIKA PUJAS)

The Pujas conducted in the Ahobilam temple do not differ much from those in the other Srivaishnava temples in South India.<sup>1</sup>

The temples are the centres of sanctity and devotion. They provide spiritual solace to the pilgrims who visit them. Normally the people will develop love, and veneration towards a particular temple depending upon the rituals, festivals and the mode of worship offered in it. It is observed that the more complex and sacred the ritual Worship, the greater the attraction towards a particular temple complex. It is on account of this reason that every temple has developed a certain established system of ritual worship and even special festivals. The devotees and the pious people naturally take into consideration the special religious and ritualistic activities referred to while visiting a particular temple and offering their donations and gifts in various forms.

In the Ahobilam temple were instituted certain special festivals, rituals and other religious ceremonies in order to propitiate the deity. A critical study of the epigraphs found in the Ahobilam temple gives us a detailed information about the daily proceedings of worship (*pūja*) and ceremonial occasions (festivals) since centuries.

The rituals of the Ahobilam temple do not differ essentially from those of the other Vishnu temples of South India like those at Tirupati, Kanchi and Srirangam. Credit for the systematisation of the temple rituals in shrines dedicated to Vishnu is traditionally given to Ramanuja<sup>2</sup>.

K. V. Ramesh states, "in a Hindu temple, the daily offerings to the various deities at different times in the day is of fundamental importance. The day-to-day ceremonies connected with worship are called the *nityapūja*, while occasional ceremonies in connection with some special festivals, are called the *naimittika*. The daily offerings are obligatory and are essential to preserve the sanctity of the shrine. They represent the basic ceremonial rituals to be performed in the temple which are governed by the *Agamas*". The worship conducted in a temple from dawn to dusk and the various special festivals are elaborately described in the *Agamas*.

It is a matter of common knowledge that the rituals in the Vishnu shrines of South India are based on one of the two main systems of worship - either the *Vaikhāṇasa* system or the *Pancharātra* system. The *Vaikhāṇasa Agama* recommends *pūja* six times a day. The timings and the details of the *Pūja* are as follows<sup>3</sup>.

1. *Pratyusha* (arunodaya)
2. *Prabhata* (pratahkala)
3. *Madhyahna* (noon)
4. *Aparahna* (afternoon)
5. *Sayankala* (evening)
6. *Nisi* (ardhajama)

The *Pancharatra Agama* liberalises this and allows discretion to the temple authorities to perform two, three, four, five, six or even twelve *pujas* in a day according to the financial position and organising ability of the temple authorities<sup>1</sup>.

We can infer from the epigraphical evidences, that the *pancharatra* form of worship has been in vogue from ancient times in the Ahobilam temple.

In every temple there are three to six different times of worship beginning from the early morning and ending at midnight during which *pujas* are performed and offerings, made. It is interesting that the inscriptions of Ahobilam refer to special *pujas* instituted by kings, queens and nobles which are called '*avasaramu*'. The elaboration of the worship and the variety of food offerings made on such occasions (*avasaramu*) varied depending upon the status of the donor. The worship ordinarily consists of sixteen services (*shodasopachara*). They are *dhyana* (contemplation), *avahana* (localisation), *arpana* (offering of a seat), *padya* (washing the feet), *arghya* (washing the hands), *acamaniya* (sipping a quantity of water), *snana* (bath), *vastra* (clothing), *yajnopavita* (the sacred thread), *gandha* (smearing sandalwood paste), *malya* (decoration with garlands and flowers), *dhupa* (waving incense), *dipa* (showing a lamp), *naivedya* (offering food), *nirajana* (circumambulation of a lamp) and *mantrapushpa* (offering a tribute). As evidenced by the inscriptions the worship offered in the Ahobilam temple is of two kinds. Of the two the more important and elaborately done is the early morning service. It consists of *shodasa-upacharas*. The other items of worship are more or less repetitions on a minor scale with some constituent items omitted. An inscription<sup>2</sup> of 1550 A.D. mentions the offer of *Tulasi*, flowers and fruits; which forms part of the important rituals of the *shodasa-upacharas* to the lord. These have been supplied to the temple from the sacred groves and flower gardens from the temple lands. According to inscriptions the daily rituals performed in the temple are as follows.

### 1. Daily Worship

Daily *pujas* are conducted only in the Upper and the Lower Ahobilam temples. In all the other shrines, *pujas* are conducted only on festival days.

The earliest inscription<sup>3</sup> which mentions the ritual of daily offerings to God Ahobaleswara is of the year 1410 A.D. The daily worship of the deity starts early in the morning with the chanting of Lakshminarasimha *Suprabhatam*.

*Tirumanjanam* or *Abhishekam* is another important ritual in the *nityapuja*, which is performed elaborately in the morning. The ritual starts with the bathing of the lord in the sacred water and milk. During the *abhisheka*, the *Purushasukta* and the other sacred names of the deity are chanted. After the completion of the *abhisheka*, applications of sandal and *sugandha dravyas* are offered to the god. The *abhisheka* ceremony comes to a close by offering food and *tambula* to the god. The decoration are followed by *archana dhupa dipa naivedya*.

It is very interesting to note that the Lord was worshipped with the chanting of his thousand names known as '*sahasranamapuja*' which was mentioned to by an epigraph of 1545 A.D.<sup>4</sup> at the

Upper Ahobilam. There are inscriptions<sup>9</sup> which refer to the preparation of *Tulsimala*, *Pushpamala* and sandal paste.

Offering the *naivedya* to the deity during the specified hours of the day and on different occasions is an important item in the daily puja. The offerings made usually at the end of each of the series of functions in the course of the worship of the deity. The food, after it is offered to the god is distributed among the temple employees and also to the devotees who gather the time of performing various services.

There is a very interesting inscription dated 1564 A.D.<sup>10</sup>, which describes how the *prasadam* like *Vada* or *Dosa* or *Appam* are distributed in different proportions to the donor, for sale and for the public distribution. There is a number of inscriptions<sup>11</sup> which detail the extensive provision made for the *naivedya*. We find that there are a number of grants made to the temples for the offering of the Lord when He is seated in certain *mandapas*, which were constructed in Lower Ahobilam. Besides the routine offerings, special offerings like *Sringara taligai* (six plates of sumptuous food of different varieties) were provided to the Lord of Upper Ahobilam in 1548 A.D.<sup>12</sup>

This inscription also records an endowment of the village for providing *sringara taligai* daily to God Prahlada of Lower Ahobilam a *taligai* (a plate of food) each for Sri Bhasyakara and Alwars and oil for burning the lamps in the temple.

Most of the inscriptions give a long list of details about the different preparations of the various provisions and groceries required for varied food offerings.

The most important and interesting feature of the celebration of different rituals is that of the offering of various types of food. Their culinary expertise and gastronomic excellence in preparing certain delicacies for the Lord's *naivedya* are of sociological interest.

After the *naivedyam* to the god, *Vidyam* (Tambulam - betel leaf and arecanuts) - is offered. There are four inscriptions<sup>13</sup> which mention the quantity of betel leaves and nuts to be offered to the Lord.

After the *pujas*, the devotees who used to visit the temple, took *satagopam*<sup>14</sup>, *tirtham* and *prasadam* (sacred water and consecrated food) from the priest, which were known as temple honours to the devotees. An inscription of 1584<sup>15</sup> A.D. records the prevalence of this type of service in the temple. Further, the Ahobilam kaifiyat,<sup>16</sup> also says that the temple honours, such as *Parivattam*,<sup>17</sup> *tirtham*, *prasadam*, *satagopam*, *Talihe prasada*, *panniru*, and *gandham* were in practice at the temple of Ahobilam. It is clear from these evidences that the devotees visiting the temples were given the *tirtham* and *prasadam* in addition to the *satagopam*. This practice of offering honours to the devotees is continued even to this day in the Ahobilam temple.

The ritual performance of the Lord reveals that the Lord's daily activities are similar to those performed by a grown-up dignified personage whose needs are to be attended to in the most befitting manner. As a result, the various ritual services rendered are symbolic of those received by an adult from his near and dear. Accordingly the Lord is awakened from sleep by singing certain hymns addressed to Him, then bathed, adorned and served with food and again put to repose at certain hours. These are parallel to the routine activities of a human (or) royal personage. They are personal and intimate in terms of human life. They reflect virtually the social impact of the age on the domain of the ritual world.

The long process of rendering services to the Lord is symbolic of its counterpart, adopted in *Vaikuntha*, the abode of Lord Vishnu. In *Vaikuntha* it is with the awakening of the Lord with the help of the recitation of specific hymns to produce harmonious and sonorous music. The next process

of rendering the services to the Lord is symbolic of how water is offered to the Lord to complete his ablutions and how light refreshments in the form of milk and its preparations ■■■ offered to the Lord in the mornings. The noon and the afternoon offerings consist of a large variety of sumptuous dishes made out of rich and delicious food.

It is evident that all the daily rituals performed in service of the Lord in *Vaikuntha* and the pomp and splendour attendant on it were observed by the kings and their admirers during the period under our study. The *samantas* (the feudatories) used to show their veneration and respect towards their overlord by offering the ■■■ ritual that ■■■ offered to Lord Vishnu in *Vaikuntha*. This has ■ political significance in that it is similar to the ritual worship offered to the mortal kings of the period under review. It is interesting to note in this connection that the deification of the king and the construction of shrines for the images of the deceased kings were started by the Cholas. The same custom ■ followed by the Chola emperors in the medieval period of South India.<sup>18</sup>

## 2. Festivals

The conduct of the daily proceedings differs naturally from the special festivals of the Lord. The celebration of the festivals has been an important and attractive functioning of the temple. Most of the donations made to the Ahobilam temple relate to this aspect and indicate its importance. Consequently the temple attracted ■ large number of devotees ■■■ from far-off places and thus became an important centre of pilgrimage. Probably there had been ■ day without the celebration of some festival or the other and special offerings being made in the temple. In fact except one or two like *Kartikapunnami*, almost all the festivals ■ celebrated with pomp and grandeur even today.

The festivals conducted in the temple are generally known by the name *utsava* or *tirunal*. The *utsavas* conducted by the temple ■ many. They ■ divided into two categories viz., the basic festivals connected with the ritual of the temple-worship which are enjoined by the *sastras* and *agamas* and some auxiliary festivals according to the nature of the establishment or the endowment by devotees etc. The *Kalyanotsava*, *Chandanayatra* and certain others have the sanction of ancient texts, while the *dhanurmasotsavas* and *Kamadahana utsava* etc., are the auxiliary festivals. Apart from the annual festivals, there ■ a number of minor festivals conducted in the temple described as *varotsavas* (Weekly festivals), *pakshotsavas* (fortnightly festivals) and *masotsavas* (monthly festivals). These are generally performed in the afternoon.

In general, the god on festival days is adorned with precious and attractive jewellery and offered worship. The *utsavamurti* (the processional idol) bedecked with valuable jewels and mounted on various kinds of vehicles on different days, is taken out in procession around the temple. On such occasions one can ■ a blending of deep devotion and joy in the pilgrims.

A brief account of the festivals celebrated in the temple over the centuries is given below.

### A. *Pulikapu sevai*

This ritual of the temple is known from the inscription of 1544 A.D.,<sup>19</sup> which speaks about the ceremony of the main idol. On every Friday, special offerings were provided to the god on those days. This is said to be instituted during Sadasiva's reign.

### B. ■■■ Pournima

This festival ■■■ *Kartika pournima* (full moon) every year. On ■ day, the temple is illuminated with lamps and the *Akhanda dipa* is replaced by new ones<sup>20</sup>. There is a Sanskrit saying that "on this day ■ should give a gift of lamp to the donor."<sup>21</sup> This festival is also known as *Krithika Dipotsavam*<sup>22</sup>. An inscription of 1547 A.D.<sup>23</sup> records ■ gift of money for providing eight offerings

in the god Ahobaleswara of Lower Ahobilam during festival that on 15th day of the bright half of *Kartika*. Even this day, this festival is celebrated by illuminating the temples.

### C. *Ekadasi Utsavas*

As is well known, the eleventh day of both the former latter fortnights, is very auspicious especially for the Vaishnavas. These are called *pakshotsavas*. They take place when an auspicious asterism appears on that particular day.

Of the *Ekadasis*, the *Jalasayana Ekadasi* is considered to be very auspicious. It is considered that Lord Vishnu retires to sleep during the rainy season which lasts for four months. This sleep on the 11th day of the former fortnight of the lunar month *Ashadha* and ends on the 12th day of the former fortnight of the lunar month *Karthika*. Hence these two days, which are called the *Sayana Ekadasi* and the *Uttana dvadasi* respectively are considered to be very auspicious. Generally liberal endowments were made on these days to attain religious merit. Probably *Jala Sayana Ekadasi* is *Toli Ekadasi* or *Prathama Ekadasi*, which is observed even in all the Vaishnava temples. We have instances of the charities, being made to the god this day, which is considered holy. An inscription of 1515 A.D.<sup>24</sup> mentions that Krishnadevaraya and his queens donated many jewels and lands for providing *anga-ranga-bhogas* (daily rituals and utsavas) and *dhupa-dipanaivedyas* (burning the lamp and offering food) to god Ahobala Narasimha on this auspicious day.

### D. *Kshirabdi*

This festival occurs in the month of *karthika*, on the *Suddha Dvadasi*. An epigraph of 1547 A.D.<sup>25</sup> that an endowment made in cash offering to god Vira Narasimha during the *kshirabdi* and other festivals like *Vijayadasami*.

A particular reference is made to *Vijayadasami* festival in an inscription of 1561 A.D.<sup>26</sup> which states that an arrangement was made for the offering.

### E. *Garden festival*

The Garden festival, probably the *Vasantha Utsava* was celebrated in the month of *Chaitra*. (March-April) An inscription of 1564 A.D.<sup>27</sup> mentions the celebration of this utsava, near a tank, constructed by Van Satagopa Jiyar on the way to Bhargava shrine. The *Jiyar* gave a gift of land to the god of Lower Ahobilam in 1564 A.D. for special offerings and their distribution during this festival. It was also called *Tirunal*, which was attended by huge congregations.

### F. *Tirunakshatras*

It is a tradition that the *tirunakshatras* (natal constellations obtaining at the time of birth) of twelve *Alvars* are being celebrated in the temple, dedicated to god Vishnu. An inscription of 1561 A.D.<sup>28</sup> clearly mentions that thirteen '*tirunakshatras*' were celebrated every month and the total number of days of *tirunakshatras* in a year had come up to 150 days. Further the inscription states that Timmarajugaru, during the reign of Sadasiva of Vijayanagara, made a provision for the celebration of all these *tirunakshatras* throughout the year. It is probable that the twelve *tirunakshatras* of *Alvars* and Ramanuja have been celebrated in the temple of Ahobilam making a total of every month.<sup>29</sup> The list of *tirunakshatras* is given at the end of chapter.

### G. *Kartika Somavaram*

The festival of *Kartika Somavaram* conducted in Ahobilam is referred to in the inscriptions of 1547 A.D.<sup>30</sup> and 1548 A.D.<sup>31</sup>



The general notion is that, *Kartika somavaram* is connected with Siva and, however, it is also connected with the festivals in the Vishnu temples. But we would like to emphasize here that, the *Kartika masam* fully recognized as an auspicious month for god Vishnu, is otherwise called Kartika Damodara. So Mondays particularly observed as fasting days and in the evenings, brahmins are fed in the name of Karthika Damodara as well as god Siva. It additionally coincides with *Kshirabdi Dvadasi* and the merit is multiplied, if the gifts are made in a Vishnu temple.

The festivals, *Utsavas* were celebrated in the temple outside, for the enjoyment of the Lord. From the inscriptions of 1548 A.D.<sup>32</sup>, 1553 A.D.<sup>33</sup>, 1558 A.D.<sup>34</sup> and 1560 A.D.<sup>35</sup>, it is known that the processions were conducted to the god of Ahobilam and the Lord made to sit in various *mandapas*, such as *Vasantha mandapa*, 16 pillared *mandapa* and four pillared *mandapa* and special food offered to god, when he was placed in different *mandapas*. An inscription of 1560 A.D. records the gift of land for providing an offering of cakes during the festivals, when Ahobaleswara was brought in procession and seated in the four pillared *mandapa* in the south-east corner of the street (*tiruvithi*). Similarly Vansatagopaliyar gave a gift of land in 1563 A.D.<sup>37</sup>, for providing offerings of rice-cakes on specified festivals, when the lord seated in the *mandapa*, in front of the *matha*, which he constructed on the *nagari* i.e. upper Ahobilam. There is another interesting inscription of 1609 A.D.<sup>38</sup> which registers the gift of two *Vimjamaras* (fly-whisks) and a white-silk umbrella with a *kalasa* over it. Viranarasimha of lower Ahobilam. These umbrellas are used when god is taken out in procession.

## H. 220-Festival days

It is interesting and significant to note that 220 festival days were celebrated to the god of Lower Ahobilam in a year. An undated inscription from the Lower Ahobilam that the Mahamandaleswara Surupa Obulayadeva-Maharaja set up the '*Garuda Stambha*' in the street, opposite to the temple made an endowment in cash for providing offerings to the god on 220 festival days in the year, on which the god was brought in a procession and seated on the platform of this pillar<sup>39</sup>.

It is stated that the days selected for festivals in Trumalai were 222 in number, made up of 108 days of eight *Brahmotsavas*, summer festivals, *kodia Tirunal* 20 days, *Adhyayanotsavam* 24 days, *unjal Tirunal* 5 days, *Tiruppavitra Tirunal* 5 days, *Ekadasi Tirunal* 25 days, *Sahasra Kalasabhishekam* 5 days, *Masa sankramanas* 12 days, *Amavasya* 13 days, *Yugadi* and *Deepavali* 2 Days, *Padiya Vettai* 1, *Tirukkartigai* 1, *Krishna's Rohini* 13; total offerings 222 *appapadi*.<sup>40</sup> It is an exaggeration to say that 220 or 222 festivals are celebrated either at Ahobilam or at Tirumalai, where there is a shrine of Narasimha, within the temple of Venkateswara and offerings made to Sri Venkateswara are also made to Yoga Narasimha par with the former.

## I. Paruvettai Utsava

The very name of the procession denotes, symbolically, the Lord went out for *Vetai* (hunting). An inscription of 1542 A.D.<sup>42</sup> registers the grant of villages to conduct *paru vettai* Utsavam and offerings to the god, when he visit those *mandapas* by one Bhutanatha Brahma Jyoyise belonging to *Riksaka* and *Ashwalayan sutra*.

However, a significant feature is that, this festival is conducted only in Ahobilam, not in any of the Narasimha temples like Simhachalam, Mangalagiri, Kadiri etc.

Even today this procession is conducted on a grand scale, for nearly 38 to 40 days. This procession starts on the very next day of the *makarasankranti* festival (i.e. on Jan. 15 or 16). The god is taken out in procession in nearly 32 villages, which are situated in a radius of 10 kms from Ahobilam.

(The names of the villages and the route plan is provided at the end of the chapter). The processional deity is placed on a specified platform or *mandapa* in each village and is offered *naivedyam*. The people of the village make a big congregation during this festival.

### 3. Significance of the Rituals and Festivals

The daily, weekly, fortnightly, monthly and annual performances and festivals are conducted in honour of Lord Narasimha. They may be understood in terms of their functional references to universal welfare, devotion to divine worship, religious symbolism, reverential spectacle, social integration, educational importance and regulation of correspondence between the major and the minor traditions of the Hindu culture.

Firstly, the performance of the rituals and festivals conducted in honour of the Lord are meant for the material and spiritual well-being of the devotees in particular and the welfare (*yogakshemam*) of all human beings in general. This reveals the functional significance of the performances.

Secondly, the festivals and rituals conducted in the temple under our study, have a special impact on the pilgrims who celebrate and participate in them actively. In the first instance, it enlightens them as to the metaphysical and the mystical significance of these rituals and ceremonies. In the second instance it will help to remodel the life of an individual according to the Hindu concept of *dharma-artha-kama-moksha*. It also enhances piety of the devotees. The devotee is the principal player in the drama of rituals and ceremonies. Total dedication, concentration and surrender to the god with the utmost devotion and reverence are required of the devotee without expecting any material reward. This ultimately paves the way for the development of worship on the lines of *bhakti-marga*.

Thirdly, the rituals and festivals conducted in the Ahobilam temple complex will give opportunity to the devout pilgrims to know about the meaning, the character and the significance of the rituals and festivals. Besides, the rituals and festivals normally influence the devotees spiritually and the resultant effect of which would be that they will develop spiritual attachment to the deity. They develop a sense of sacrifice and dedication not only towards the god but also towards the fellow-human beings. That these festivals and rituals have had humanitarian importance and value is without doubt. Besides, they also reveal the symbolic and spiritual significance of their performances.

Fourthly, most of the rituals and festivals were celebrated with pomp and splendour through various types of offerings, the use of ornaments and finally, the utilisation of the temple paraphernalia. Such grand celebrations are found to occupy a position of paramount importance. The nature or the way of celebrating rituals and festivals has become a centre of attraction to the people at large and the devotees in particular. Thus, people belonging to different castes, customs and traditions used to flock around the temple complex at Ahobilam. This fact has a sociological significance in that it paves the way and facilitates a special impetus for the development of social mobility. It is likely that these rituals and festivals might have promoted social equality, in the first instance, in the presence of the god and later in the society. This might be the most potential reason for the absence of socio-economic tensions during the period under our consideration. This is very well attested by the epigraphs and literary works of that time.

In conclusion we may state that the temples in general and the rituals performed in the Ahobilam temple complex in particular, reflect or reveal a combination and an accommodation, at once, of some great and small traditional elements. This is very characteristic of the Hindu culture in India. The main temple and the main god housed in the sanctum represent the great tradition. The main temple is surrounded by many subsidiary temples for the accommodation of the *parivara devatas* or subsidiary deities. This aspect clearly reveals a harmonious combination and a judicious compromise of the traditions, referred to above.

# LIST OF THE TIRUNAKṢATRĀS OF ĀLVĀRS AND RĀMĀNUJA CHĀRYA

S.No.	NAME OF THE ALVAR	TIRUNAKS ATRAM	TAMIL MONTH	TELUGU MONTH	ENGLISH MONTH
1	Poygai Ālvār	Sraavanam	Tuila Sankramana	Kārttikam	November
2	Pūdatta: Ālvār	Dhanista	TulaSankaramana	Kārttikam	November
3	Pey Ālvār	Satabhisam	Tula Sankramana	Kārttikam	November
4.	Tirumala Sai Ālvār	Mēgha	Makaramāsam	Pusyam	January
5.	Nammālvār	Visākha	Vrsabhamāsam	vaisākham	May
6.	Madhura Kāvi Ālvār	Chitta	Mesamāsam	Vaisākham	May
7.	Kulasēkhara Ālvār	Punarvasu	Kumbha Sankramana	Phālgunam	March
8.	Periālvār	Swāti	Mituna Sankramana	Jyestham	June
9.	Āṇḍal (Gōḍā)	Pubba	Karkataka Sankramana	Sraavanam	August
10.	Tondarādippa- ṣṍi Ālvār	Jyestha	Dhanus Sankramana	Mārgasiram	December
11.	Tiruppāṇ Ālvār	Rohini	Vruschika Sankramana	Kārttikam	November
12.	Tirumangai Ālvār	Krttika	Vrschika Sankrama	Kārttikam	November
13.	Rāmānuja Chārya	Ardra	Mēsamāsam	Vaisākham	May

## ROUTE PLAN OF श्री LAKSHMI NARASIMHA SVĀMI PĀRUVĒTTAI UTSĀVAM

1. ~~Bach~~ Palli
2. Kondampalli
3. Krishnapuram
4. Kota kandukur
5. Marri palli
6. Yadawada
7. Alamur
8. Thimmana palli
9. Narasapuram
10. Muttaluru
11. Nallavagu Palli
12. Bachapuram
13. Nagi Reddy Palli
14. ~~Pudlakurdi~~
15. Allagadda
16. S. Lingam Dinne
17. Saravaraya Palli
18. M.V. Nagar (Allagadda)
19. Chinthakunta
20. Devarayapuram
21. Gubagundam
22. Jambula Dinne
23. ~~Mandalur~~
24. Nakkala ~~Dinne~~
25. Chandalur
26. Chilakalur
27. Thippa Reddypalli
28. T. Lingam Dinne
29. Nagulavaram
30. Tuvvapalli
31. Rudravaram
32. Lower . ~~Ahobila~~



### 1. General Remarks

An institution like the Narasimhasvami temple at Ahobilam, which enjoyed a lot of resources due to donations of land, money etc., made from time to time and in which elaborate rituals and festivals had to be conducted, required a good system of management and a number of persons meant for conducting different services in the temple. This aspect of study would provide useful information about one of the important social institutions that played a significant role in ancient society.

It is not very easy to build up a consistent history of this aspect relating to the Narasimhasvami temple due to the non-availability of data pertaining to the situation as it obtained from time to time. We have, of course, a few inscriptions which throw some light on this aspect. But most of these belong to a short span of about two hundred years in the Vijayanagara period. There are very few inscriptions for the period preceding and the inscriptions of the later period are just short donatory records. However, there are a few temple records useful for the purpose of the study.

### 2. The Functionaries of the Temple

With regard to the temple functionaries the epigraphs do provide some information, though not comprehensive. But the temple record preserved with the Manager throws much light on this aspect in particular. This temple record prepared by the Government officials and the temple authorities, the most recent document of 1980, gives a comprehensive list of the functionaries engaged in the service of the temple. Before proceeding further, two points, as known from custom here, deserve to be noted:

1. The post of some of the functionaries are held on a hereditary basis. Eventhough, this is not a matter of right in recent years, preference is given, by convention, to the members of the family to which the functionary concerned belongs.

2. Another feature pertains to the conditions of the tenure and the remuneration paid to the functionaries. Till recently, the employees were paid in the form of *Prasada* (Portion of cooked food and other items offered to the God) and endowment of land. But he was only a mortgagee and not the owner of the land. The functionary was allowed to cultivate the land and enjoy its proceeds as long as he was engaged as the employee of the temple. In modern times, the functionaries are paid in the form of cash.

The personnel associated with the temple may be classified as Religious and Miscellaneous functionaries.

#### A. Religious functionaries

##### i. Archakas

The priests (*archakas*) of this temple belong to a minor sect of the Srivaishnavas called *Bhattars*, a community which is to be seen performing similar functions in the Srivaishnava temples that follow the *Pancharatra-agama system* of worship<sup>2</sup>. At present, there are two *archakas*, one looking after the Upper Ahobilam and the other placed in charge of the Lower Ahobilam.

D.Ramaswami Iyyengar's manuscript of 1916<sup>3</sup> mentions the poor state of the *archakas* who were paid only Rs.2/- per month. Further it states, "during the month of March, 1914, these priests complained that they were not paid for many months". This book also writes that, this place was totally inaccessible and hence, practically difficult to reach.

The records of 1982 preserved with the Manager mentions the names of four *archakas*, K.P. Venugopalan, R. Raghavachari, N. Kesava Iyyengar and A. Seshachari and they were paid Rs.150/- as salary per month.

The inscriptions of Ahobilam do not mention anything about the *archakas*. The history of the Ahobila *matha* informs however that the *Jiyars* of the *matha* were the trustees of the temple and they had full powers to appoint priests and other functionaries.

##### ii. Paricharakas and Sthanikas

Usually in all the Srivaishnava temples, these *paricharakas* are assistants to the priests and are also Srivaishnava brahmins. At present, each shrine has one assistant. The main duty of the *Paricharakas* is to assist the priest in the *pujas*. They have to bring the water needed for the rituals in the temple and clean the vessels, collect all the objects needed for the daily rituals in the temple, distribute the *prasada* among the devotees after the *naivedyam* etc. But, much to our surprise, the *paricharakas* are mentioned as sudras both in the temple records and the Ramaswamy Iyenger's manuscript.

The temple record mentions the names of three *paricharakas*, Sanjanna, Subbanna and Veeranna and they were paid Rs.90/- each towards their monthly salary. But, at present, the temple has two Srivaishnava *paricharakas*, who assist the priests, appointed by the Ahobila *matha*.

##### iii. Miscellaneous Functionaries

In order to carry on the various other functions, there is a band of people appointed for the purpose. They include cooks who prepare rice and other dishes for the daily and special offerings to the God, people who supply flowers from the temple gardens, people who play the wind and percussion instruments etc., the palanquin bearers, people who carry oil torches during the procession of the gods, servants maintained for decorating and cleaning the temple, watch guards including those who announce time by blowing trumpets and by beating drums.

The inscriptions of the Vijayanagara period mention a variety of functionaries who assist in the proper conduct of daily *pujas* and festivals. These functionaries are listed down below and also the amount of money was paid to them.

Sl.	Dates of the Inscription	Functionaries	Amount paid
1.	1560 <sup>3</sup> A.D.	Cook	1/2 Varaha
2.	"	Person who prepares flour	3 Rukhas
3.	"	Person who prepares blackgram flour	3 Rukhas
4.	"	Person who brings groceries and other things	1/2 Varah
5.	1563 <sup>3</sup> A.D.	Person who prepares ritual paste	1/2 Rukha
6.	1564 <sup>4</sup> A.D	Who fetches water	1 Rukha
7.	"	Carpenter (Kammara)	1 Rukha
8.	"	Who blows pipe	3 Rukha
9.	"	Kshetravasi	1 Rukha
10.	"	Cobbler	1 1/4 Varaha
11.	"	Wicker-basket maker (Medaravadiki)	1 1/2 Rukha
12.	1586 <sup>7</sup> A.D.	Vaishnavas (Probably who participate in the temple rituals)	6 Varahas
13.	"	Person who gives sacramental bath to the God (Probably the priest)	1 Varahas
14.	"	Gardener	7 Varahas
15.	"	Garland maker	5 varahas

### 3. Administration and Management ■ Administrative Personnel

#### A. The present situation

There are also ■ few officials who are associated with the administration of the daily activities of the temple.

The temple's administrative record<sup>8</sup>, states ■ provision for the appointment of non-hereditary trustees and appointment of an executive officer. Also, it records that, compromise proposals were made on behalf of the hereditary trustees ■■ 31-3-1947 stating ■■

1. The manager or agent to be appointed by the board should be paid a sum of Rs.100/- per month towards his salary. Out of Rs.50/- is to be met from the temple funds and Rs.50/- ■ to be met from the Ahobila matha funds. The Manager ■ appointed ■■■ be a disciple of the matha, and

2. That all orders to the manager or agent will have to be issued through the hereditary trustee and the manager discharge his duties without affecting the rights and privileges of the hereditary trustee. The board ■■ decided to accept the terms proposed by the hereditary trustee ■■■ modifications providing, *inter alia* ■■■ the salary of Rs.120/- per month may be paid to the manager by equal shares by the Jiyar or the matha and the temple,



3. That the proposal to appoint a disciple of the matha selected and accepted as a manager capable of supervising the religious functions of the temple and obeying all lawful orders of the hereditary trustee, and

4. The board shall frame rules for the proper administration of the temple.

#### B. Administration

The trustee board<sup>9</sup> had framed rules for the proper administration of the temple.

According to the rules, the manager will draw half of his salary and D.A. from the funds of the temple and the other half be payable to the manager from the funds of Sri Ahobila matha within the first seven days of a month.

According to the records, Sri Adivan Satagopa Yatindra Mahadesika was the first hereditary trustee, 100 years ago and the 44th Jiyar of the matha is the present hereditary trustee from 1957, who resides at Srirangam.

Sri Lakshminarayana is the manager appointed by the hereditary trustee with effect from 21-5-1961.

The record, further states that the Manager appointed should look after the properties of the temple, and also gives a list of lands and jewelleryes.

#### C. Properties

As per an old approved property register<sup>10</sup> the following lands are possessed by the temple.

Sl.No	Lands	Wet Acs.Cts.	Dry Acs. Cts.
a)	Lands taken over by Government Under Estate Abolition Act 1948 situated at Gundala and Obulapuram Villages	3.71	5593.46
b)	Forest land given to temple	—	101.00
c)	Lands in possession and enjoyment of the Servicedars of the temple.	5.81	80.17
d)	Lands kept vacant	6.56	132.14
e)	Lands covered by lease approved order	9.26	72.04

#### I. Donation of Wooden Chariot by the Hereditary Trustee

The Hereditary Trustee of the Temple has donated a Wooden Chariot worth about Rs.70,000/- from Sri Ahobila Math, Triplicane, to the temple. The said Chariot has been kept in the premises of Ahobila Matha in the Sannidhi Street at Ahobilam. The Manager is requested to enter this chariot in the property register of the temple.

## ■ Gold, Silver ■■■■ and Metallic Idols

S.No.	Description of Property	Weight		Insured value of the articles
		Grams	M.Grams	
1.	Gold articles	1,430	550	Rs. 53,828-00
2.	Silver articles	76,513	621	Rs. 83,000-00
3.	Metallic idols (Measurement in C.M&M.M)			Rs. 74,850-00
	Total			Rs.2,21,678-00

At present, the group of managerial functionaries consist of a Manager, a clerk-typist, four attenders placed at different choultrys and a sweeper.

### 4. The Epigraphical Data

A few inscriptions<sup>11</sup> mention the treasury of the Lord (*Sri Bhandara*) in which ■■■ revenues in kind and cash accruing to the temple ■■■■ deposited.

One *senabova*<sup>12</sup> has been mentioned ■ the man in charge of the ■■■■ of the *Sribhandara* of the temple.

There are many Vijayanagara inscriptions,<sup>13</sup> which mention about *Mudrakarta*, ■ representative of Van Satagopa Jiyar, *Karyakarta*, a representative of the ruling king and *Sthanamvaru* (local representative) form a corporate body to look after the temple administration.

#### A. Temple Management at different periods

The over-all management of the temple ■■■ possibly looked after by several persons as ■ committee ■ sometimes by some individuals. The inscriptions of different periods give us an impression that the structure of the temple management was changing from time to time. For some periods, however, we have no definite information. Still with the extant data, an account may be attempted. To be exact, reliable epigraphical evidence is restricted to the Vijayanagara period. So it would not be ■■■ of place to make a general survey of the temple management making ■■■ of the inscriptions outside Ahobilam also.

#### B. From 11th ■ 13th century

During the rule of the Telugu Cholas and the Kakatiyas in the South Andhra, each temple had a separate administrative committee formulated and controlled by the village assembly concerned. These committees looked after almost ■ aspects of the temple administration including the conduct of the religious services and the management of revenue ■■■ expenditure of the temples. This feature is noticeable mostly in the *agrahara* villages. Some of ■■■ temples, however, ■■■■ have been managed by some individuals called *Sthanamvaru* who were in charge of one or ■■■■ temples. In this context, we may also ■■■■ that *Sthanapati* was the highest officer of many temples in Andhra country ■ evidenced by a number of inscriptions.<sup>14</sup> Many inscriptions invoke the protection of the Srivaishnavas for the donations made to the temples. Probably there were ■■■■ religious groups which were in charge of the temples. *Sthanapathis*, who exercised more ■■■■ and power can be gleaned from the later inscriptions also. In the absence of proper records throwing light on the administration of ■■■ temple at Ahobilam we would ■■■■ wrong in considering ■■■■ method of management described as ■■■ above was there for the Narasimha Svami temple also.

### C. From the 14th to 16th century - Van Satagopa Jiyars of the Ahobila Matha

The inscription of the time of 1535 A.D.<sup>15</sup> there is reference to van Satagopa Jiyar. This inscription is of great historical interest as this introduces us for the first time possibly the Ahobila matha Jiyars, who figure later as the important figures of the Ahobilam temple.

An inscription of 1550 A.D.<sup>16</sup> registers a record set up by the trustees, consisting of Srivan Satagopa Jiyar, *Ahobila Sihanamavaru* (Local representatives) and *Karyakarta* (representative), *Uggarasangaru* on behalf of Kondaraju Chinna Timmayyadeva Maharaju and other dignitaries record certain arrangement regarding offerings to be made to the god.

An inscription of 1554 A.D.<sup>17</sup> registers the *dasavanda* grant of land in the village of Pedakallu for the maintenance of the temple situated in the village Alamuru which also belonged to the temple. This was set up by the authorities of the temple including Parankusa Van-Satagopa Jiyar, *Ahobila Sihanamvaru* (Local Chiefs) and certain Peddayya, the agent of Mahamandaleswara Aliya Ramappayya.

From 1558 A.D.<sup>18</sup> onwards, there appears to be little change in the management. Instead of Jiyar's direct involvement, a *mudrakarta*, Jiyar's representative appears to figure in the inscriptions. The powers, of the Jiyar enjoyed were equally entitled to the *mudrakarta* also. At the end of each inscription, they (committee consisting of three representatives) assure that they would maintain these perpetually and in their hand. In the section there are three signatures Sri, Sri, Sri. All the signatures are in Telugu characters, and it is made clear that these persons have their hand in corporate body.

### D. From 18th century onwards

The paper manuscript of D. Ramaswamy Iyengar preserved in the Madras Archives, states that, "When the Jiyangar left Ahobilam settled at Tiruvallur, he left the management in the hands of an agent of his called *Mudrakarta*".

"The system of appointing *Mudrakartas* was brought into vogue by the rulers of the Pushpagiri Math. The Mathadhipati remained at Pushpagiri and as his jurisdiction extended over a considerable area, appointed deputies to look after the disciples in various parts of India and report from time to time any irregularity on their part in the observance of caste rules or performance of religious rites. These agents, who were called *Mudrakartas* had no fixed salary but rented the privileges for a certain number of years. The offences, generally taken cognizance of by them were;

1. Disregard of the priest's orders
2. Disregard of the local Sabha
3. Sexual connection with Sudra Women
4. Drunkenness
5. Non-observance of ceremonies
6. Brahmin widows of more than 20 years not shaving their heads
7. Flesh eating
8. Illicit intercourse with a woman
9. Other minor offences

Of the above restrictions were enjoined on the brahmins also.

The Ahobilam and the *Vanamamalai Jiyangars* have followed the system of appointing *Mudrakartas* in different areas of their spiritual jurisdiction. It is clear that the Ahobilam *Mudrakartas* have no power over brahmin disciples. Their privileges were as follows.

1. To collect fees from *dasaris* and *basavis* or unmarried women who go about the country holding a *garudakambam* and begging their food. The *dasaris* have to pay a registration fee ranging from Rs.1 to Rs.5, in accordance with their individual means. After they were conferred the privilege of the *mudradanam* they were licenced to tonsure the heads, and smear the faces of the pilgrims with sandal paste at Ahobilam. Every year they have to pay a recurring fee of Rs.4/- as long as they continue the profession.

2. To collect certain fees during marriage and death ceremonies. To collect these fees, *mudrakarta* appointed *sattani* deputies who go about and dun out the amount from the *dasaris*.

3. To conduct *samayachara* i.e., in *ahobilam* in complicated cases of religion and arbitrate disputes among *dasaris* and with due judicial temperament make decisions for those people.

4. So then, the *mudrakarta* has originally spiritual power alone. When the *Jiyangar* went south, he invested the Ahobilam *mudrakarta* with the duty of managing the Ahobilam temples and their properties. That custom has developed into a rule of investing the Ahobilam *mudrakarta* with the functions relating to their properties and the priest of the *dasaris*.

A *mudrakarta* purchases the privileges for a certain number of years. The annual contribution paid by him to the *matha* is Rs.250 and he gets in return a lucrative situation with none to question him in the midst of a forest. No *mudrakarta* earns a positive valedictory opinion. Justly or unjustly, he becomes the target of all kinds of accusations. Occasionally we hear men of probity and ability to have held that post. But popular opinion asserts that some who have been in that post were not worthy of the position. The people in the country round, exaggerate the irregularities of these *mudrakartas*. When one leaves one's native home, the cost of one's maintenance naturally increases. As such, a *mudrakarta* who has to live many miles away from Ahobilam and maintain a cart and some other luxuries too to keep up his status, is generally looked upon with an envious eye by the people. But it is inexcusable, if *puja* is not regularly conducted within the temples and lights are not kept in the shrines and servants are not paid regularly. It is equally inexcusable if large amounts made available by the *matha* for repairs were to be misappropriated in parts and the portions intended to be repaired left as they were. In fact, such a kind of cheating is also going on in the shrines occasionally. In general, the ability of the local people to manage the shrines in the interest of the large body of disciples and pilgrims is not of the right order. Further, it will be improper to allow the management of the temples originally managed by a proper *Jiyangar*, to fall into the hands of non-brahmins. It is equally uncharitable to make the *Mudrakarta* subordinate of the local people.<sup>19</sup>

## 1. Economy

### A. Sources of Income

An institution like the Narasimhaswami temple at Ahobila which was conducting elaborate rituals and celebrating a number of festivals spread throughout the year, and which was also employing a large number of people for the purpose, needed resources enough to maintain all these. Like any other temple, the Narasimhaswami temple also depends on two types of income : Voluntary contributions from devotees visiting the temple and the revenue derived from its landed property.

### B. Casual donations

The casual and small contributions made by the devotees to the temple can hardly find a mention in the permanent records like the inscriptions. However, the practice of contributing such donations appears to have been old. There is a reference to this practice in an inscription<sup>1</sup> of 1560 A.D. It says that all contributions of money, grains, cloth and ornaments coming to the temple should be properly accounted for and deposited in the temple treasury.

### C. Landed property

Landed property and other permanent endowments being perpetual assets naturally find references in a number of stone inscriptions. The services performed and festivals celebrated are regular. They require a huge and recurring expenditure. The funds have to be met from permanent sources of revenue more than the casual and sporadic contributions from the people. Thus we see, in a number of inscriptions, donations of villages, lands and taxes to be collected from various sources etc. having been transferred to the custody of the temple concerned. As such, the income from them may be substantial and permanent for carrying on the activities of the temple without hindrance. The inscription of Krishnadevaraya of 1515 A.D.<sup>2</sup> reveals that the temple enjoyed several such assets.

Such assets may have been gained possibly from the time of the first construction of the temple itself. But no inscription of that time is available here. The earliest inscription recording such a grant to the temple belongs to the time of Sri Krishnadevaraya<sup>3</sup>. This inscription was set up by the king Krishnadevaraya himself in the year Saka 1438, *Kava* cyclic year *Pushya Suddha-15* corresponding to 1515 A.D. December 21. It records the gift of one necklace with emerald and diamonds, one locket with diamonds, a pair of armlets studded with rubies, one gold plate, besides 1000 *varahas*. It also registers the gift of one pendant by his queen.

Also it registers the grant of village Maradur or Muddur situated in *Chagalamarrisima* for conducting *angaranga vaibhoga* to God. Probably this must have been a substantial grant which utilised considerable resources to the temple.

It is during the Vijayanagara time that this temple began to grow wealthy enough to increase the number and variety of *pujas* and festivals, adding colour, dignity and splendour to this temple.

In 1532 A.D.<sup>4</sup> a few lands were added during the reign of Achyutaraya, and hence the temple gained more assets. A person from Porumamilla made some offerings to God in the form of lands. For this purpose, he purchased two pieces of land from the temple estate, after paying the required amount to the temple treasury. The land consists of some wet land, and the other, a piece of dry land. The location of these lands is given with particular marks i.e., one is under the *Pathruni Cheruvu* and the other by the side of *Lotus tank*. In the first piece of land the donor prescribed to grow a garden for the benefit of the temple i.e., the produce is to be used for growing flower plants and small fruit plants which are to be daily offered to the God. In the second phase also it is prescribed that the grain produced should be utilised for the offering of the God.

During the reign of Sadasivaraya more lands and cash were added to the temple. It is due to the philanthropy of the Vijayanagara officer that the temple gained another grant of 50 varahas as principal amount in the treasury of the temple. It is stated that the interest accruing from the said principal amount should be spent for conducting a special festival. The temple gained another village Jambuladinne in *Koilkuntlasima*. Interestingly enough, this gift was given all the rights like *Ashtabogatejasvamyas*, i.e., the right of sale, exchange and gift. In 1548 A.D.,<sup>5</sup> the temple received another 120 gold varahas as a principal amount and the recurring annual interest is to be utilised for offering 15 plates of *dosas*.

In the period between 1550 A.D. and 1610 A.D. this temple gained extensive donations from the Vijayanagara officers stationed in the region. This is also a period in which we find elaboration of daily rituals and addition of a number of new festivals.

An inscription dated 1550 A.D.<sup>6</sup> registers the gift of a piece of land in the village Alamuru purchased from the corporate body of the temple and this land was utilised for the purpose of growing a garden, and also a land yielding one *putti*, three *avanas* purchased from a person of Alamuru and also another piece of land purchased from the temple land to grow coconut trees, betel leaves, mango trees, plantains and other fruit yielding trees. It further records that out of the produce 1/3 should be given to the god and the remaining 2/3 to the four gardeners and in the wet land one half of the produce was to go to the god and the remaining half to the cultivator. It is clear from this record that this grant provided new employment to the people of the region.

In 1552,<sup>7</sup> Gurijepalli in *Dupatisima* was gifted to the temple and 500 varahas as income from the village was given to maintain a free-feeding home in Lower Ahobilam. In the same year, another 20 varahas were added to the temple treasury.

An inscription dated 1554 A.D.<sup>8</sup> mentions the construction of the *Konasamadram Srimanaranyana samudram* in the north-east of Alamuru. The person who irrigated the temple lands was given the yield measuring two *puttis* out of dry land and two *marthurs* out of wet land as remuneration. Besides he was also granted another remuneration in the shape of *dasavandha*.<sup>9</sup> In this grant, we find that he was given a separate grant of land as remuneration for excavating the tank and *dasavandha* (1/10 of the produce) grant for the maintenance of the tank. From 1560 A.D.<sup>10</sup> there are a number of inscriptions giving details about food offerings and the expenditure incurred in their preparation.

The inscription mentioned above records a grant of 100 varahas in the temple treasury towards the cost of some land in two pieces, yield measuring two separate Maruthurs of wet land. The yield from the two pieces of land is stated to be 10 Puttis of paddy and its cost is estimated to be 10 varahas. This amount is to be spent towards the preparation of the *manoharalu*, one plate on each day of the god's procession. It is quite interesting to note that, for the preparation of this variety of sweet, they have specified the weight and measures of the ingredients. For the preparation of the said sweet, ingredients are specified as follows. Rice 1/2 Manika, Black gram pulses 1/2 Manika, 3 Chittus and Jaggery 7 1/2 palas, pepper 1/4 chitti, ilachi (one gajjanam weight), betel nuts 3, betel leaves 6.

At this rate of the offering, that is one plate every day, there would be 250 prescribed times (*putalu*) expenditure of 20 varahas.

Items	Expenditure		
	Varahas	Rukhas	Visa
Rice	2	1 1/4	-
Green gram pulse	2 1/2	8 1/4	-
Ghee	6	4 1/4	2
Pepper	-	5 1/4	-
Ilachi	-	5	-
Jaggery	3 1/2	4 1/4	2
Nuts	-	2 1/2	-
Betels	-	2 1/2	-
Cook	1/2	-	-
Firewood	1/2	-	-
Flour maker	1	-	-
Miscellaneous	-	4 1/2	-

#### Conversion Table

1 Rukha	=	Four Quarters
4 Visas	=	One Quarter Rukha
16 Pinu	=	One Rukha
10 Rukhas	=	One Varaha / Gajjana

Having specified the cost of the *manoharalu*, the total amount of the gift money of 20 varahas is approximately adjusted. If any marginal deviation or difference in the expenditure is to be incurred, it is to be adjusted out of the miscellaneous expenditure which is specified to be one gajjana and 4 1/2 rukhas. This record gives us an idea of the cost of Manohara offerings for the specified 250 times.

For example, the cost of rice ■ stated ■ be one gajjana ■ 1 1/4 *rukhas* for 7 *tumus* and 3/4 *kunchas*.

Item	Rate		Quantity	
	Ga	Ru	Tumus	Kunchas
Rice	2	1 1/4	7	3/4
Blackgram	2 1/2	5/4	6	1/2 pulses

Another inscription of 1563 A.D.<sup>11</sup> which adds ■■■■ cash to ■■■ temple treasury is looked after by the *jiyar* of Ahobila *matha*. The specifications registered ■ the inscription are ■■■ 600 *varahas* ■ given by an officer to the temple treasury to purchase some wet land measuring 6 *marthurs* and the location of the land also is specified. ■ turn, the said chief Vobularaju is stated ■ have made a gift of the said 6 *marthurs* of land ■ the temple and agreed to submit the produce at ■■■ of 5 *puttis* for each *marthur* totalling to 30 *marthurs* of paddy to ■■■ temple ■ gift and this produce will be utilised for the daily offerings to Nammalvar at ■■■■ of 1/4 *tumu* rice ■■■ *kotha rukha* per day. It is quite possible that ■■■ area of land was reckoned in ■■■■ of the quantity of potential produce raised in that ■■■■ of land. The total amounts ■ 4 1/2 ■■■■ for Amruthapadi for the year and other expenditure 360 *rukha's* per year. The cook charges 120 *kotha rukhas* and the amount totals upto 480 *kotha rukhas* per year. Another condition is ■■■ the offerings are to be made in the name of the said chiefs and *prasadam* is ■ be utilised for feeding 12 Vaishnavas daily.

Another inscription dated 26th August, 1563 A.D.<sup>12</sup> describes some more ■■■■ of ■■■ temple. This registers the gift of income from the village Kalutapalli situated in *Korakolasima* amounting to 230 *varahas*. Out of this amount, the *polivutu* offerings would cost 162 *Gajjanas* (*varahas*) and other offerings amount to 68 *varahas*, the total would be 230 *varahas*. Again Vobula Raju made a gift of 1 *puttu* of land in Padakandla village which was equivalent to 40 *varahas* and another 2 *puttis* of land in Dornipadu village the income of which would be 40 *varahas* and another 2 *puttis* of land in the village Injedu, the income of which would be 40 *varahas*, and another wet land ■ *marthurs* in the village Bayyapagudur the income of which was 20 *varahas*. The total yield of these four items of land amount to 370 *varahas*. And this amount is ■ be spent for the offerings to the god during ■■■ period of stay of god in the mandapa constructed by the donor in Kamasamudram Narasayya's house. So far, the income and expenditure of the gift and lands and the offerings ■ the god ■■ broadly stated. There follows ■ detailed description of certain items which are missing.

Some items extant may be given ■ follows :

S. No.	Item	Rate		
		<i>Varaha</i>	<i>Rukha</i>	<i>Kanis</i>
1	2 plate rice	1 <i>varaha</i>	1 <i>rukha</i>	-
2	Pepper (1/16 of one measure cost being)	-	-	2 <i>kanis</i>
3	Curd (3 measures cost)	1/4 <i>rukha</i>	-	2 <i>visas</i>
4	■■■■ Betels	1 <i>rukha</i>	-	-
5	400 leaves	1 <i>rukha</i>	-	-
6	■■■■ paste	1/2 <i>rukha</i>	-	-
7	Fire wood	-	2 <i>visas</i> of <i>Rukha</i>	-
8	Cook	1/4 <i>rukha</i>	-	-



## Conversion Table

4 Kanis	1 Ana/Visa
■ Kanis	2 Anas
64 Kanis	1 Rukha
16 Ana	1 Rukha
10 Rukhas	1 Varaha

In this way some of the items are specified while other items are indistinctive. At the end of the distribution of the offerings, the procedure for the distribution of the *prasadam* is also furnished. (One measure is ■ be given to the *matha*, and another measure for two Vaishnavas. 62 *vadas* ■ 15 betel leaves ■ also to be given to Math.)

In 1563 A.D.<sup>13</sup> an inscription was set up by the presiding *Acharyas* of the Ahobila *matha*, Sri Parankusa Vansatakopa *Jiyar*. This inscription clearly throws light on ■ ■ and ■ of the different groceries at that time.

The register indicates a gift of offering 40 *dosas* ■ the god. For this purpose, the table of items cost-wise is furnished below according to the ■ given in the inscription.

Items	Rukhas	Anas	Kanis
Rice	-	8	-
Greengram pulse	-	2	-
Ghee	-	3	-
Salt	-	-	2
Sugar	-	1	-
Firewood	-	-	2
Cook	-	-	2
Flour maker	-	-	2

In this way there would be 114 prescribed times and for each prescribed time ■ offering cost 1 *rukha*. so, 114 *rukhas* were expended which amounted to 11 *varahas* and 4 *rukhas*. The additional amount 3 *varahas* and 7 *rukhas* might have been ■ for ■ miscellaneous expenditure in ■ year. So too, there are a quite good number of such inscriptions. We come ■ a marginal amount perhaps ■ meet the additional expenditure.

Similarly another inscription of 1564 A.D.<sup>14</sup> registers a grant by the *Jiyyamgaru* of the land (dry land) measuring 12 *tumus* in the village Lingamadinne in *Gandikotasima* which was ■ to ■ by a certain Narasayya who got ■ from Nandya Thimma Raju. The income of the 12 *tumus* of the gift land is calculated at 8 *varahas* per year. Another piece of land measuring 5 *tumus*, the income of which is specified ■ 5 *varahas*. These amounts for *Thrunal* offerings are allotted for the expenditure on items specified ■ detailed in ■ following ■.

Item	Gajjanam (or) Varaha	Rukha
Rice $\frac{1}{2}$ kha	3½	
Curd rice ( $\frac{1}{2}$ tumu)		2
Tiruvisas ( $\frac{1}{2}$ tumu)		1
Greengram		$\frac{1}{4}$
Curd (1 tumu, 1 kuncha)		1
Ghee		2½
Milk ( $\frac{1}{2}$ tumu)		2
Sugar		$\frac{1}{2}$
Plantains (50)		$\frac{1}{2}$
Plantains (20)		$\frac{1}{2}$
Pepper		1/8
Dried ginger		$\frac{1}{4}$
Pickles		1/8
Caster oil ( $\frac{1}{2}$ measure)		$\frac{1}{4}$
Appa palli ( $\frac{1}{2}$ tumu)		1
Ghee		2
Jaggery		3
1000 Nuts		1
300 Betel leaves		2½
Sandal paste		1
Green gram pulses		1
Jaggery for syrup	$\frac{1}{2}$	
Cook		1½
Fire wood		1½
Waterman		1
Carpenter		1
■ ■ ■ ■ maker		1
Piper		3
Kshetravasuniki		1
Kanika		$\frac{1}{4}$
Cobbler	1¼	
Miscellaneous		$\frac{1}{2}$
Anaga		$\frac{1}{2}$

One-fourth of the *prasadams* is distributed to the donors, ¼ is allocated for sale, 2 parts for free distribution. Accordingly of the 71 *appas*, 18 *appas* to the donor, 18 offered for sale and 35 are distributed freely. Similarly out of the 71 *vadas*, 18 are distributed to the donor, 19 are sold, 34 *vadas* are allotted for free distribution. This is how the distribution of the *prasadam* registered.

1586 A.D.<sup>15</sup> inscription of Venkatapatiraya II gives a list of various taxes collected from different villages and how this was spent on different items. It was up on the 9th of February in the year 1586 A.D. The purpose of the record is to register the monetary gift of *varahas* which a certain chief called Venkatarajadeva Choda Maharaja was entitled to receive from different villages.

His income of varied from various had been donated to god Ahobilesvara shown below. (Source of income called *Kavali sunkam* from different villages.)

Village	Varahas
Bommi Reddy Tank (5+5)	10
Alamuru (12+5)	17
Chinna Bodhanam	12 1/2
Narasapuram	1 1/2
Mutthalur	10
Jammula dinne	7
Vengalam palli	7
Padakandla	1
Nagulavaram	7
Lingamdinne	7
Total	varahas

#### Expenditure of the 80 *varahas*

Item	Varahas (per annum)
Rice for Amrutha padi (2 <i>puttis</i> , 5 <i>tumus</i> )	15
Ghee	30
Expenditure in Vaishnavas	6
<i>Tirumanjanam</i> (Sacramental bathing)	6
Cook	6
Worship of the Lord	3
paste - maker	2
Gardener	7
Garland maker	5
Total	80 <i>varahas</i>

This chief was the same as the donor referred to in the inscription dated 1584 A.D.<sup>16</sup> In the present inscription, he is the donor of some offerings etc. specified already and the ruling king Venkatapati Raya.

The last grant recorded is by a merchant guild. This inscription of 1609 A.D.<sup>17</sup> was set up by the members of a merchant guild of *Penukondapura*. It registers the gift by the members of seven gold gilded *kalasas* for the temple *gopura* (Pinnacle) and one such gold *kalasa* along with one used in the procession of the god. The names of the donors of these *kalasas* are given below.

- |  |                 |
|--|-----------------|
| 1. Krishnma Setty son of Araveeti            | 1 <i>Kalasa</i> |
| Chennama Setty and Rangayya                  | 2 Fly whisks    |
| of Seshadri both donated one                 | 1 Umbrella      |
| Kalasa and 2 fly whisks and                  |                 |
| white silk umbrella with kalasa              |                 |
| 2. Thimmappa son of Viluri Venkata Setty     | 1 <i>Kalasa</i> |
| 3. Lakshmaiah, of Pola Mallaiah              | 1 <i>Kalasa</i> |
| 4. Potam Setty, son of Devi setty Mallisetty | 1 <i>Kalasa</i> |
| 5. Saravaiah, Son of Rachamadugu Lingaiah    | 1 <i>Kalasa</i> |
| 6. Papaiah, Son of Madisetty Tippaiah        | 1 <i>Kalasa</i> |
| 7. Lingi setty, son of Madisetty Jenniah     | 1 <i>Kalasa</i> |

It is quite likely that this is the only merchant guild inscription.

#### D. General information regarding the above inscriptions

Most of the inscriptions refer to the offerings mentioned in detail. However, the inscription set up by the merchants of Penuonda, gives a list of the gifts of guild *Kalasas*, fly whisks and one umbrella.

Some of the inscriptions specify particulars regarding the items to be prepared and the expenditure to be incurred for the preparation of these items. In some records, the distribution of *prasadam* is also specified. Over all management of the temple seems to be in the hands of the presiding *acharya* of the *matha*. Although we find the mention of the members of the temple, their interference in the affairs of the management seems to be very little. Officially the documents are executed firstly by the *Jiyar* through the secretary, secondly, by the trustees of the temple, thirdly, by king's representatives, fourthly, in some cases local chiefs, fifthly, in some cases local officials (*adhikamvaru*). These are stated to be the authentic executors.

Out of the temple proceeds, money is lent at interest though the rate of interest is not known from the inscriptions. However, certain more offerings are made out of the amount realised as interest.

Consequently the reference to any social aspects such as the employment and payment to service personnel including women is not found in these inscriptions. In this respect, the inscription of Ahobilam differs very much from those found in many other temples like Sri Sailam, Bapatla in Andhra Pradesh or those of Karnataka which offer details of social nature. Even from the inscriptions belonging to a Vaishnava temple, very little is known about the theology of Vaishnavism. The geographical information is also very scanty.

By about the end of the 16th Century A.D., this temple had 18 Sarvamanya villages; 80 Acres were lands in other places and the right of collecting some taxes in villages.

Though the income accruing annually to the temple treasury cannot be made out all the inscriptions are not well preserved, we may say from the extant one that it exceeded 3165 gold varahas by about the end of the 16th century A.D.

## 2. Items of Expenditure

All the income derived from the assets were to be utilised variously by the temple, as enjoined by the various donors. As already indicated, the major items of expenditure in the temple prior to the Vijayanagara period are not known through the records.

During the Vijayanagara period several new services were included. Thus there were offering of perpetual lamps and several varieties of lamp circumambulations (diparadhana), provision for the supply of flowers, costly scents and perfumes like *Punugu*, *pachchakarpura* and *panniru*. There were food offerings totally four times a day in which varieties of dishes were to be offered to the god. The varieties of dishes included rice preparation, puddings, sweets etc. all of the best types in the culinary art of Andhra. Similarly elaborate details for the distribution of *prasadam*s from the various dishes offered to the god give us an impression that the various food offerings were not only of excellent quality but also of substantial quantity.

Likewise, such arrangements for offering somewhat elaborate services, though not of the same scale of the Lower and Upper Ahobilam temples, were organised in the various other adjoining shrines, inside and outside the temple. It is during this period that many other shrines and temples grew in number at Ahobilam.

Again during this period an impressive list of festivals and elaboration of old festivals begin to figure in the inscriptions for which provision has been made to meet the expenditure from the temple treasury out of the revenue accruing from various donations mentioned above. We hear from these inscriptions a ten - day festival (*Brahmotsava*), a month-long festival commencing from *sankranthi* festival (*Paruvettai-utsava*), a three-day festival (*Rathotsava*), occasionally -conducted long festival (*tirunal Mahotsava*), seven - day festival in the months of February-March (*Vasantha-purnima*) etc. Many of these festivals included the procession of gods and offerings of worship to them in different pavillions outside the temple and offering special *naivedyam* and distribution of *prasadam* on these occasions.

Besides, various donors donated villages or set apart a portion of the income to be gained from their donations, either for the conduct of any festival in the Upper or Lower Ahobilam temple or for the free feeding in the *Ramanujakuta*.

## 3. Addition of Jewellery, Utensils etc.

From about 19th century there was altogether a new trend. Probably by this time the temple had enough resources to run the varieties of *pujas* and festivals and thus we see not the addition of land grants but offering of costly gold and silver utensil for services, jewellery for decorating the gods and varieties of vehicles for use in processions.

## 4. The temple in the economic life of the region

The economy of the Ahobilam temple provides a glimpse of the role of such institutions in the general economic life of the land. The temple acted not only as a religious institution but also as an important economic institution. It required a lot of assets, created employment for a large number of people and maintained facilities for the devotees coming from far and near. The success of the temple

consisted of lands it owned. It had a great capacity to generate employment and promote commerce directly and indirectly. Directly, it maintained a large staff for running the ritual and other activities connected with it. Apart from the persons directly employed to till the lands, a good number of others received lands in the region for the maintenance of specific endowments to the temple like rendering the special services. The festival gatherings created opportunities for commerce and business on the precincts of the temple. One of the greatest services rendered by the temple was possibly in the field of extension of agriculture, by way of repairing or constructing the tanks and bringing new lands under cultivation. For private individuals, it would be a formidable task but a wealthy institution like this temple, with its good officers, men and money could easily afford to do this.

From an inscription at least, we have such an instance being recorded. An inscription of 1554 A.D.)<sup>18</sup> refers to the excavation and maintenance of the irrigation tank and the same inscription has a reference to the new lands that could be brought under cultivation.

The temple was the biggest consumer of the locality. It required a variety of commodities and services for its day-to-day conduct as well as for special festive occasions. In the early stages, the requirements of the temple were probably few. But the steady increase in the offerings, festivals and rituals from about the 15th century A.D. resulted in the increase of the articles required by the temple. They include rice, gram, pulses, turmeric, pepper, mustard, jaggery, salt, betel, camphor, kumkum, coconut, fruits, milk, ghee, butter, curd, oil, honey etc.

The temple was the biggest consumer in the locality not only of the food articles and the perfumery, but also of other articles like cloth, wooden objects, jewels, gold, silver and brass lamps, decorative articles and the like. In this way, the temple stimulated and encouraged crafts, industry and trade.

## 5. Social Interaction

### A. General Remarks

The temple, though founded by some zealous individuals, has exerted influence on the larger section of the society, promoting a religious attitude among the people and serving them by furthering the cause of communal peace and harmony and the general happiness of the community. The extent of beneficent influence exerted by a religious institution such as the Ahobilam temple can be gauged by its impact on the society in general by way of interaction.

The Indian social structure was predominantly based upon the system of stratification. The successful operation of any social institution in a given age depended upon the magnitude of its positive interaction with the numerous classes and caste groups, identifying its own function with the meeting of the peculiar needs, promotion of interests and fulfilment of the aspirations of the populace at large.

The inscriptions available in the Ahobilam temples have some information relating to the various individuals that participated directly or indirectly in the affairs of the temple. So it would be an interesting exercise to find out to which class and caste these individuals belonged, thus identifying the impact of this temple on various social groups. However, we must confess that the information available in these inscriptions is very much limited and hence for this study are forced to adopt a slightly different method. We have tried here to assess the role of the temple by pooling up whatever information is available from various sources and interpreting them against the background of the present day situation, wherever it becomes necessary.

### B. Participation of different professional groups

Most of the inscriptions present in the Narasimhaswami temples are donative, which would normally contain details of donations of a substantial kind only. So naturally the various donors that figure

here come from such of the ~~social classes~~ which had adequate resources to direct a portion of their means ~~to~~ socio-religious causes. Such classes, in the historical context, can be identified as the royalty, the class of state officials, the rich traders and trading organizations and sometimes rich agriculturists.

Peculiarly enough, the names of the major donors for this temple, as recorded in inscriptions come from the section ~~of~~ clearly associated with royalty. Between the beginning of the 14th century and the end of the 16th century A.D. when major donations accrued to this temple we have an array of such persons belonging ~~to~~ various social strata.

There are thirty inscriptions recording the ~~details~~ of the donations. Out of these, there is only ~~one~~ inscription directly from the King Krishnadevaraya in 1515 A.D.<sup>19</sup> All the other inscriptions ~~are~~ of private individuals namely Brahma Jyoyushu, Abbiraju, Uggarasayyangu and the other name not clear. In the early 16th century<sup>20</sup>, the inscriptions were those of Chinna Aubulayyadeva Maharaju, the Nandyala chief in 1548 A.D.<sup>21</sup> and in 1300 A.D.<sup>22</sup> Mahamandaleswara Narasamgaru in 1552 A.D.<sup>23</sup> Mahamandaleswara Kondayyadeva Maharaju, in 1553 A.D.<sup>24</sup> Mahamandaleswara Venkatadriveva Maharaju, in 1555 A.D.<sup>25</sup> Mahamandaleswara Ganapathi Deva Maharaya, in 1558 A.D.<sup>26</sup> Mahamandaleswara Timmarajugaru, in 1560 A.D.<sup>27</sup> Mahamandaleswara Gopinatharajugaru, in 1563 A.D.<sup>28</sup> Mahamandaleswara Aubalaraju, in 1586 A.D.<sup>29</sup> Mahamandaleswara Venkatarajudeva choda Maharaju. The four other inscriptions are from the corporate body (trustees) of the temple, two from Parankusa Jiyar, ~~one~~ from a *Nayankara* (name not known) and one from the merchant guild.

Thus these inscriptions provide a picture of the peculiar situation relating to this temple. Why alone this temple ~~was~~ mainly patronised by the rulers of the day and why there is practically nothing coming forth from the other wealthy classes like the merchants and the rich land owning class, cannot be easily understood. Possibly this may indicate a situation in which it ~~was~~ only the royalty and their close associates that have come under the influence of Sri Vaishnavism ~~in~~ the time. Or was it a case in which compared ~~to~~ the rich donations from the royalty, the donations made by the other sections of ~~the~~ society were of ~~a~~ meagre consequence and value ~~as~~ to go unrecorded in the epigraphical documents?

### C. Participation of different castes

At present, the Narasimha temple at Ahobilam employs people belonging to various castes for carrying out different functions and it also ~~employs~~ people of various caste groups from this region. The inscriptions also throw some light on the involvement of and participation by people of different sections of society.

This, being a Srivaishnava ~~religious~~ institution, it ~~goes~~ without saying ~~that~~ the Srivaishnava ~~Brahmins~~ were intimately connected with the ~~affairs~~ of the temple. We have indicated elsewhere that the priests, - *paricharakas* and the *adhyapakas* - who formed a substantial section among the temple employees were all Srivaishnava Brahmins. The management was also directly under the control of a Srivaishnava *matha*. ~~Besides~~ these, there ~~appeared~~ to have been a number of Srivaishnavas, who though not employed by the temple directly, ~~were~~ enjoying certain privileges like free - feeding and rendering service through the ~~agency~~ of the temple.

~~Brahmins~~ were respected for their learning and pious life. Numerous were the endowments made in their honour and ~~for~~ their ~~maintenance~~. For example, an inscription<sup>30</sup> of the time of the Vijayanagara king Venkatapathiraya II mentions the grant of money to Srivaishnavas. The total ~~of~~ 80 *varahas* granted was divided into 9 parts, and ~~the~~ *varahas* were granted to Srivaishnavas, whose *gotras* and names are not mentioned. Another inscription of the ~~time~~ of Sadasivaraya of 1563 A.D.<sup>31</sup> mentions different ~~grants~~, one of which grant is ~~made~~ to Srivaishnava *sangha*.

As Ahobilam is situated in the ~~the~~ forest area, probably ~~the~~ functionaries connected with ~~the~~ temple might have stayed in Peddamudiyam or nearby places. We find many epigraphical references to Srivaishnava *agraharas* ~~in~~ Peddamudiam.

In the life of the Srivaishnavas of this region ~~the~~ temple occupies an important place. Owing ~~to~~ the impact and influence of the teachings of Vansatagopa *Jiyar* and his disciples, the importance of ~~the~~ temple and service ~~to~~ the deity housed therein assumed ~~a~~ new dimension. Especially because of ~~the~~ emphasis Srivaishnavism laid on the *archa* form or idol manifestation and the value of service to God in the temple, every Srivaishnava deems it his duty and honour to do one kind of service or ~~the~~ other to the temple.

There ~~are~~ ~~a~~ few other Srivaishnavas who were ~~the~~ brahmins by ~~caste~~ but yet were associated with the Srivaishnava temples. Though they hailed from different ~~caste~~ groups, they had accepted the Srivaishnava tenets. Many of these were staunch devotees of Ramanuja and ~~had~~ taken ~~a~~ ~~a~~ way of life which did not differ much from that of the Srivaishnava Brahmins. For example, we have in many other Srivaishnava centres like Kanchi<sup>32</sup> references ~~to~~ ~~a~~ class called *Dasas* and *Nambis*. ~~It~~ is said that they formed ~~a~~ class called *Sathada Srivaishnavas*<sup>33</sup> and they looked after ~~the~~ temple gardens and served the god by supplying flowers for worship and they ~~were~~ known for their dedicated service.

There is only one reference in the Ahobilam inscription. A record of the time of Sadasivaraya mentions the grant of a few varahas ~~to~~ *Sathada Srivaishnava* who was in charge of gardening and supply of flowers to the god Narasimha.

The Ahobilam inscriptions refer to a few other individuals probably belonging to different castes. An inscription of 1609 A.D.<sup>34</sup> mentions ~~a~~ merchant guild which records that a grant of seven gold gilded *kalasas* for the temple *gopura* by Chennama *setty*, Viluvavivenkata *setty*, Potama *setty*, Saravaiah, Papaiah and Lingama *setty*. The surname *Setty* indicates that they were probably of ~~the~~ merchant community.

Another inscription of 1558 A.D.<sup>35</sup> mentions vocational groups of workers such ~~as~~ basket-makers, carpenters, cobblers, barbers, palanquin carriers etc. Probably, there are a group of employees other than Srivaishnava Brahmins for various manual services in the temple. It is not unlikely that the same situation is prevailing at present also.

Ramanuja's revolutionary reforms<sup>36</sup> in the contemporary social structure and a continuation of the same trend by the successive teachers of the faith appear ~~to~~ have made ~~a~~ impact on the people of this region in bringing them closer to the Narasimhasvami temple ~~at~~ this place.

In the Narasimhasvami temple there is an age-old ~~custom~~ in which people belonging ~~to~~ the so-called tribals - (*Chenchus*) being given the privilege of the first service during the *Brahmotsava* ceremony. The practice is that on the ~~the~~ day of the *Ratotsava* ceremony, the *Chenchus* belonging to the tribal community, should hit the mobile chariot with their bows. We have already mentioned earlier the relationship of the *Chenchus* with the temple. The prevailing customs, unimaginable in a tradition - bound society, must have enhanced ~~the~~ interaction of ~~the~~ people belonging to ~~tribal~~ groups with this temple. ~~It~~ is a common sight in ~~the~~ region ~~to~~ ~~see~~ people of various castes including ~~the~~ tribals decorating themselves with the *urdhvapundra* (*namam*), calling themselves as the followers of Srivaishnavism and considering the god Narasimha of Ahobilam as their family deity. ~~The~~ impact of this trend is well seen in the various ~~customs~~ they adopt in ~~their~~ religious life including the naming of their children. It is ~~a~~ very common thing to come ~~across~~ in ~~the~~ region people of various castes bearing names like Ahobala, Aupalayya, Obulanna, Aupaladeva, Obuleshu, Obulu and so on -all after the



name of this diety. A casual survey of the prevalence of these names reveals that the influence of Ahobilam is seen spread not only in all the regions of Andhra but also in the neighbouring state of Karnataka.

When this sort of close affiliation of the people with the temple started is difficult to ascertain from the epigraphical data. The earliest inscription which refers to a brahmin named 'Vobula' belongs to the 11th century A.D. which is found in the village Peddapeta, which is a hamlet of Yadiki. Vobula is a simplified form of *Ahobala*. The appearance of such names like *Obalayya*, *Obulesu* etc. among non-brahmin communities of the region is to be seen in a number of inscriptions dating from 11th to 17th century A.D. and the inscription of this region is galore with such names.

#### D. Promotion of Social Good

This temple was also a centre of learning and education. With it were associated *Srivaishnava mathas* which served as seminaries and schools. The establishment of Ahobila *matha* by Vansatagopa Jiyar is indicated by a few inscriptions of Ahobilam. Even to this day this *matha* continues to be a centre of religious and philosophical studies. That this place promoted higher learning is indicated by a string of epithets associated with a number of persons mentioned in various inscriptions. The Jiyars were often called the establishers of the path of the Vedas (*Vedamarga Pratishthanacharyas*) and as the promoters of the faith of Ramanuja.

The need for facilities for the travellers and visitors in a pilgrim centre like Ahobilam, situated in a hilly and far off place, is quite obvious. Even free feeding for the pilgrims is arranged in private homes or elsewhere through the agency of public institutions such as *mathas* on festival days like *paruvettai*. An important institution that admirably served this need in ancient times was the *Ramanujakuta*, in which free food is offered to the poor and the pilgrims. An inscription of 1552 A.D.<sup>27</sup> mentions the grant for the maintenance of the *Ramanujakuta* at lower Ahobilam. There is also mention of *Ramanujakuta* in the inscriptions of the surrounding areas of Ahobilam, where, the idol of god Narasimha visits the villages, during the *paruvettai utsava*. This institution have served a welcome facility encouraging pilgrims from various parts of the country visit this place, and providing greater scope for social interaction among people of different communities and regions. It also served as an institution for the poor feeding.

Similarly the various festivals celebrated with pomp and colour attracted a large number of people of different social groups facilitating social interaction and the consequential integration. Such large gatherings helped the local craftsmen and traders to improve their business and a number of artists of various kinds display their talents. Thus the temples at Ahobilam were serving varied needs of the society effectively.

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#### Chapter - 1

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6. S.I.I., XVI, No. 96, p.111
7. *Bramhandapurana: kshetrakhanda, Ahobila Mahatmyam*, ch.I.
8. Ibid.
9. Ibid., ch.II
10. *Nalayira Divya prabandham*
11. S.I.I., XVI, No. 271, p.278
12. Ibid., No. 235, p. 241
13. S.I.I., IX, No. 207
14. *Bramhandapurana: Kshetrakhanda, Ahobila Mahatyam*, ch.VII.
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16. E.I. XXXVIII, No. 56, p.340
17. *Inscription of Andhradesa*, Vol.II, part-I, Guntur District, S.No. 196, p.247
18. *Bramhandapurana: Kshetrakhanda, Ahobila Mahatyam*, Ch.I
19. Ibid., ch.II
20. [REDACTED]
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22. These poems form a part of 4000 Tamil songs known as *Nalayira Divya Prabandham*, which are sung in all the Vishnu temples even today. One hundred and eight places are revered as *Divyadesas* or places of divine residence by Sri

Vaishnavas. Among them, Ahobilam, known as Singa-vel-kunram, occupies an important place. The *Nalayira Divya Prabandham* contains more than 75 verses on Lord Narasimha by various Alvars and out of them ten by Tirumangai Alvar are specifically on Sri Ahobila Narasimha. The *pranams* of Tirumangai Alvar are given below.

அங்கன் ஞாலஞ்ச அங்கோ ஞானபாய, =  
பொங்க வாகம் வள்ளுகிராற் போற்றத் புனிதனிடம்  
பைங்கணாளைக் கொம்பு கொண்டு பத்திமைபாய்: அடிக்கீழ்  
செங்கணாளிமிட்டி, குன்றமே (1)

1. When Hiranyakasipu, feared by all in this beautiful wide world, challenged his son Prahlada to show Lord Vishnu in a particular pillar in his Audience hall, God, who is ever pure, appeared to him of it tore into his chest with His sharp nails. That Narasimha now resides in Singa-Vel-Kunram where lions with angry eyes pay tribute to Him by offering ivory tusks of elephants killed by them.

அலைத்தபெழுவாய் வானெயிறுனோர் கோளரியாய், =  
கொலைக்கை யானள் நெஞ்சிடத்த கூருகிரானிடம்  
மலைத்தசேலைத் தெறித்த பூசல் வளங்குடி வாய்க்குப்பச்  
கிலைக்கை வேடர் தெழிப்பறாக் கிங்கவேள் குன்றமே. (2)

2. Hiranyakasipu, who known for his inhuman cruelty, torn pieces by Narasimha of incomparable mettle, exhibiting his wrath through twisting tongue shining fangs. The Narasimha resides in Singa-Vel-Kunram which resounds the noise of trumpets the twang of bows of the local hunters way laying the pilgrims to the shrine (The dangers faced by pilgrims the days of the Alvars truly portrayed by him).

ஏய்ந்த பெழுவாய் வானெயிறுனோர் கோளரியாய், அவுணன்  
வாய்ந்த வாகம் வள்ளுகிரால் வகிர்ந்தவம் மானிடம்,  
ஏய்ந்த மாவு மூடைத்தஞ்ஞு மன்றியும் தின்றழலால்  
தேய்ந்தவேயு மல்லலிலைச் சிங்கவேள் குன்றமே: (3)

3. Narasimha of unparalleled heroism, with a fitting wide mouth and sword-like sharp teeth reduced to smithereens the body of Hiranya which empty. That Lord now resides in Singa-Vel-Kunram is characterised by nothing but animals getting killed by roaming on the surface, broken hills bamboos destroyed by forest fires. (The weird environment is as fascinating to the Alvar as the charming groves with buzzing and dancing peacocks elsewhere).

எல்வம் வெவ்வேல் பொன்பெயரோள் ஏதலனினுயிரை  
வல்வி, ஆகம் வள்ளுகிரால் வகிர்ந்தவம் மானிடம்  
கல்வ நாயும் கழுகும் உச்சிப் போகோடு கால் கழன்று  
தெய்வ மல்லால் செல்லவொண்ணாச் சிங்கவேள் குன்றமே. (4)

4. Lord Narasimha a prey to the adamantite the body of Hiranya who with lethal was an enemy of devotees. He now resides in Singa-Vel-Kunram, which, of devouring dogs, preying eagles, the fire of the mid-day and whirlwinds is to none but gods. (The Alvar is happy it is inaccessible to hostile elements with malevolent intents).

மென்ற பெழுவாய் வானெயிறுனோர் கோளரியாய், அவுணன்  
பொன்ற வாகம் வள்ளுகிரால் போற்றத் புனிதனிடம்  
நின்ற சேத்தி மொண்டுகுறை நீள் லீகம் பூகரியச்  
சென்று காண்டத் கரியகோயில் சிங்கவேள் குன்றமே (5)

5. The peerless Lord Narasimha with fearful jutting jaw and sword-sharp had a relatively light of disposing of Hiranya who was practically of dread. He now resides in Singa-Vel-Kunram the blazing reddish forest spreads the assisted by the whirlwind.

எரித்த பைங்க னிலங்குபெழுவாய் யெயிற்றோடி தெல்வகுடுவென்று  
தீயு வாணோர் கலங்கியோட விருத்தவம் மானிடம்.  
நெறித்த வேயின் மூழையு அன்று தீனெறி வாயுருகை.  
தெய்வ மல்லால் செல்லவொண்ணாச் சிங்கவேள் குன்றமே. (6)

6. "What kind of stange form ■■■ Man-Lion with gleaming greenish eyes ■■■ glowing jaw containing flashing fangs!" thus exclaiming, ■■■ gods ran helter skelter unsteadily in fright. That Lord of all now resides ■■ Singa-Vel-Kunram where tigers look for the pug ■■■ of their prey, ■■■ elephants, among ■■ large ■■■ of ■■■ bamboo bushes.

முனைத்த சீற்றம் வின்கடப்போய் முடிவாகும்பிறவும்  
அனைத்து மஞ்ச வாணியா யிருந்தவம் மாளிடம்  
கனைத்த நீடும் கல்லுமலவா விவ்வுடை வேடருமாய்த்  
நனைத்த நீயைஞ் செல்லபொன்னாச் சிங்கவேள் குன்றமே.

(7)

7. The denizens of the three worlds were ■■■ with ■■■ apprehension that ■■■ universe would ■■■ ■■ end because the increasing ire of Lord Narasimha began burning the skies. He now resides ■■ Singa-Vel-dKunram which is ■■■ of ■■■ noise of bursting stones burnt by forest fires and ■■■ more fierce hunters roaming with their bows.

நாத்த மும்ப நான்முகனு மீசு மாய்முறையால்  
ஏத்த அங்கோ ளானியா யிருந்தவம் மாளிடம்  
காய்த்த வாகை நேற்றொவிப்பக் கல்லநர் வேயங்கழைபோய்த்  
தேய்த்த நீயால் வின்கிவக்குஞ் சிங்கவேள் குன்றமே.

(8)

8. ■■■ ■■■ Siva continuously and by turns extol ■■■ unrivalled Lord ■■■ in an appropriate ■■■ ■■■ till their tongues become thick with fatigue. That Lord now resides in Singa-Vel-Kunram where the dried up fruits of Vahai ■■■ make a rattling noise in the wind, while the ■■■ pipe like bamboos, emerging amidst stones, rub against each other, brightening the sky with the resultant fire.

நம்பலை நெஞ்சே நாததொழுதும் நம்முடை நம்பருமாள்  
அல்லீ மாதர் புலகநின்ற வரபிரந் தோளளிடம்  
நெய்வி மலகிக் கல்லுடைப்பப் புய்விலை யார்த்து, அதர்வாய்ச்  
சிவ்வி சிலவெள் ளொய்லளாத சிங்கவேள் குன்றமே.

(9)

9. O! my benign mind! let us worship Narasimha, who is our own Lord, who ■■ enfolding Mahalakshmi, ■■ His side, who is endowed with ■■ ■■■ ■■■, and who is now residing in Singa-Vel-Kunram where ■■■ growing trees break through rocks with their spreading roofs, where the palm leaves rustle ■■■ crickets screech unceasingly.

செங்க ளானி யிடிகுறைஞ்சுஞ் சிங்கவேள் குன்றுடைய  
எங்க ளீச னெம்பிராளை விருந்தமிழ் நூற்புலவன்  
மங்கை யாள் மன்னுதொய்கீர் வண்டறை தார்க்கவிபன்  
செங்கை யாள் செஞ்தொய்மலை வல்லவா நீதிலரே.

(10)

10. Those mastering these ■■■ by the generous Alvar, ■■ ■■■ of ■■■ poetry and Ruler of Tirumangai, ■■■ blessed by Vaishnava-Sri, wearing ■■ garland attended by buzzing bees, will, by the grace of that Lord Narasimha, face no evil ■■■ derive auspicious benefits.

23. S.I.L., XVI, No. 235

24. Ibid., No. 263

25. Ibid., No. 169

26. Ibid., No. 235

27. This type of reservoirs is found in Hampi, which ■■■ of bigger size.

28. S.I.L., XVI, No. 263

## Chapter - 2

1. Kurnool District Gazetteer, (rev) 1974, Hyderabad.

2. Cuddapah Inscriptions, ed. Venkataramanaiah, N., Madras, 1972, Introduction, P.6.

3. Sastri, K.A.N., A History of south India, London, 1958, ■■■ ■■■.

4. Rana Rao, M., Temples of Sri Saillam, Hyderabad, 1967, P.10.

5. Cuddapah Inscription, ed. venkataramanaiah, N. Madras, 1972, Introduction, P.7

■ E.I., Vol. VIII, P. 67.

7. Ibid., P.72
8. Ibid., P.67
9. E.I., Vol. vii, P. 111
10. Luders, *A list of Inscriptions* (1909-1910).
11. Burgess, *Buddhist stupas of Andhra Pradesh and Jagannatha Peta, Lankes, 1887, P. 100*
12. Sircar, D.C. *Select Inscription* Vol. I, Calcutta, 1965, P.11
13. Gopalachari, K., *Early History of the Andhra country, Madras, 1976, P. 49*
14. Ajayamitra Sastri, A., *Coinage of the satavahanas and the coins from excavations, Madras, 1972, P.33.*
15. Gopalachari, K., *Early History of the Andhra country, Madras, 1976, P.35*
16. Chittoor District, Gazetteer, (rev) 1979, Hyderabad, 1979, P.24
17. Kurnool District Gazetteer (rev) 1974, Hyderabad, P.32
18. *Cuddapah Inscriptions*, ed. Venkataramanaiah, N. Madras, 1972 *Introduction*, PP. 69
19. *Cuddapah District Gazetteer*, (rev) 1974, Hyderabad, P.32.
20. Krishnamurthy, M.S., *The Nolambas*, Mysore 1980, P.1.
21. Rama Rao, M., *Temples of Srisaillam*, Hyderabad, 1967, P.10
22. Sastri, K.A.N., *The cholas Madras*, 1955 pp. 100-101.
23. *Inscriptions of Andhra Pradesh Cuddapah District*, Vol. I No. 111
24. i. *Malepadas Plates of Punyakumara* (E.I. XI.P.344).
- ii. *Domnara Nandyala Plates of Punyakumara* E.I., XXVII. P. 111 ff
- iii. *Madras museum plates of J. K. K. C.P.*, No.5 of 1935-36, JH, XV, PP. 30 ff
- iv. *Pedachapalli plates of Sri Srimanohara*, E.P. Madras VI. PP.13FF.

The King of this dynasty used Telugu language for the first time in the history of Andhra for issuing inscriptions. The first Telugu inscriptions found at Kalamalla in Kamalapuram taluk, assignable to the 6th century A.D., is in Telugu, which was issued by Dhananjayavarma, the first king of the line. All the stone inscriptions of this dynasty appear in Telugu and the copperplate one in Sanskrit. The following is the genealogy of the Renati Cholas as given by M. Venkataratnam on the basis of the inscriptions.

Dhananjaya 575 A.D.

Mahendra Vikrama 600 A.D.

*Pratapa*

*Pratapa*

Lord of Chera, Chola and Pandya countries Gunamedita Punyakumara

M. vasantapori *Pratapa* A.D.

Vikramaditya I C. 600 A.D.

*Pratapa* C. 700 A.D.

Vikramaditya II

Cholamaharaja C.700. A.D.

Uttamaditya C.725 A.D.

Satyaditya C. 725. A.D.

*Pratapa*

Vijayaditya Chola C.750.A.D.

25. E.I. XXVII, P.248.

26. A.R.E., 314 ■ 1922.
27. *Cuddapah District Gazetteer*, (rev). 1967, Hyderabad. P.76
28. ■ Guruswamy A., *Temples of Cuddapah District*, P.5
29. *Telangana Inscriptions*, Vol. 11. PP. 34-37
30. A.R.E. No. 319 of 1911
31. S.I.I., Vol. X., No. ■
32. Ibid., No. 448
33. *Kurnool District Gazetteer* (rev). 1967, Hyderabad
34. Ibid., P.53
35. Ibid., P.55
36. Chittoor District Gazetteer, (rev) 1979, Hyderabad P.25.
37. Inscriptions of Andhra Pradesh, Cuddapah ■■■■■ Vol.I No. ■
38. Rama Rao, M., *Temples of Sri Sailam*, Hyderabad, 1967, P.14.
39. Srinivasulu .K., *Gandikota-charitra-samskriti* (Telugu), Proddatur, 1988, P.51
40. ■ Inscriptions of Andhra Pradesh, Cuddapah District, Vol. I, No.73
41. ■■■■■ K., *Cuddapah District - Inscriptions* (Telugu), proddatur, 1988, P.52
42. S.I.I. Vol. X. No. 10
43. Lakshminarasimham, K., ed. *Andhra Pradesh charitra of kasesarvappa*, Hyderabad 1966, P.46
44. S.I.I. Vol. X, No. 550
45. Sampath., M.D., *Chittoor through the Ages*, Delhi, 1980, P.■
46. Ind. Ant., Vol. XX, P.53
47. Srinivasulu, K. ■■■■■ - Samskriti, Proddatur, ■■■■ P.53
48. *Kurnool District Gazetteer* rev. P. 36., Hyderabad, P.36
49. Sampath, M.D., *Chittoor through the Ages*, ■ 104.
50. Ibid., P.105.
51. *Anantapur ■■■■■ Gazetteer*, (rev) 1970, Hyderabad P.59.
52. Ibid. PP. 61-62
53. Ibid., PP. 83-84
54. *Cuddapah Inscriptions* ed. Venkataramanah. N. Madras, 1972. P.53
55. Ibid
56. Venkataramanayya, N., *Further sources of Vijayanagara History*, Vol.1.
57. A.R., No. 564 of 1916
58. I.A.P.C., I., No. ■
59. ■■■■■ Gazetteer, (rev) 1974, Hyderabad, P.43
60. Ibid., P.44
61. Ibid., PP. 44-55
62. *Cuddapah District Gazetteer*, (rev) 1967, Hyderabad, P.7

### Chapter - 3

1. Quoted by K.C. Varadachari, *Alvars of South India, Introduction*, Bombay 1970
2. It may be noted in this connection that, of the Twelve Alvars, one was a woman saint, Andal, who cannot be considered, strictly speaking, as an Alvar. But she has been given that status since she occupies such a pre-eminent position among the devotees of Vishnu.
3. Nilakanta sastri, K.A.N., *Development of Religion in South India*, Madras, 1963, P.45.
4. This discredits incidentally the famous story of Tirumangai meeting the great Saiva saint Jnana sambandhar
5. However, there are many resemblances, in literary form and religious sentiments, between Jnana sambandhar and Tirumangai.

- A famous Telugu Kavya, *Amuktamalyada* or *Vishnuchitaya* written by Krishnadevaraya, the Vijayanagara Emperor, is based on ■■■■■.
7. ■■■■■ Sastry, K.A., *Development of Religion of South India*, Madras, 1963, ■ 47
8. In his work *sankalpa suryodaya*, Vendantas Desika makes a passing reference to Melkote by appreciating the place for its good climate ■■■■■ pleasant look
9. Anonymous, Daily worship ■■■■■ Matha, Sri ■■■■■ Priya : *Azagia singers of Ahobila*, special issue ed. V.P. Raghava chari ■■■■■ K.Devanatham, vol. 73, Nos 3-4
10. Raman, K.V., *Sri varadaraja swamy temple*, kanchi, New Delhi, 1975
11. *Inscriptions of Mysore*, P. 315
12. A.R., 256/50-51 ■■■■■ No. 370 and No. 393 of *Srirangam Temple Inscriptions*
13. *Samsthanam of Ahobila Mutt, Sri Nrisimha Priya Azagia singers of Ahobila*, special issue., Vol. 13. Nos. 3-4, June 1992, P.50.

#### Chapter - II

1. Venkateshwara Sastri, . M. Srimadhahobila Mahatmyamu I, Nrisimhapriya (Telugu), March 1982, ■ 10. ■■■■■ Parthasarathi Battacharu Pandita. ■■■■■ Mannadu, Ahobila Kshetramu - *Puranakantha*, Aradhana, April - 1956, ■ 62.
2. *Sri Simhachala Kshetra Mahatmyam* (Sanskrit), Published by ■■■■■ Devasthanam of Simhachalam, Slokas. 11-17.
3. Of ■■■■■ four places ■■■■■ and Harapenam cannot be identified. ■■■■■ in ■■■■■ of Vishakapatnam.
4. *Sri Simhachala Ksetra Mahatmyam* (Sanskrit), Published by the Devasthanam of ■■■■■ ■■■■■ 11-17.
5. The *Kaifiyats* are digests prepared from *Kaviles* or village registers containing information on the political, religious, social ■■■■■ other conditions of villages ■■■■■ the Deccan and were prepared by ■■■■■ and musaddis working under Col. Mackenzie. ■■■■■ *Ahobila Kaifiyat* ■■■■■ in Telugu and was written by ■■■■■ karnam Ramanna in the year (1810, 28th July 1810). The *Kaifiyat* is available in the ■■■■■ of Archives ■■■■■ Hyderabad.
6. *Guruparamparai* is available in many versions. The vedagalai version provides a detailed account and hence this has been ■■■■■ use of in ■■■■■ present work.
7. Ramesan, N., *Temples and legends in Andhra Pradesh*, Chapter III, pp. 27-28.
8. Mack. Vol. (S.A.) No. 100, *Ahobila Kaifiyat*, pp. 4-5.
9. Ramesan, N; *Temples and legends of Andhra Pradesh*, Chapter III, pp. 27-28.
10. Srinivasacharya, Kilattur, *Sri Ahobila Kshetra Maha Samproksanam Commemoration Souvenir*, 30th June, 1971
11. Subramanya Sarma, Tangirala, *Sri Ahobila Kshetram, Andhradesa Charitra Bhugola Sarvasvamu*, Vol. II, p. 89.
12. Patanjali Sastri, N. *Sri Chaitanya Mahaprabhu Andhradesa Paryatanamu*, Aradhana, March, 1955, p.6.
13. *Census of India*, 1961, Vol. II. A.P. Part - VII, B(II)
14. ■■■■■ Songs in Telugu.
15. Srivan Satagopa Jiyar, ■■■■■ Parinayam (Sanskrit).
16. D. Ramaswami Iyengar's ■■■■■ manuscript, "A Descriptive History of the Forgotten Shrines of Ahobila" (Madras, 1916) preserved in ■■■■■ Archives, ■■■■■.
17. E.I. Vol. XXXVIII, ■■■■■ - II, PP. 338-340.
18. Abdul ■■■■■ Khan *A unique Narasimha Icon*, Hyderabad, 1914.
19. "The plaque is important for many reasons. Next to the Ashtabujaswami Temple, the image of which is lost, this is the earliest form of Vishnu (Nrisimha) known to us from any part of Andhra. The tradition of dedication of such plaques became popular in the later ages and Sivaramamurthy has referred to one from Peddamudiya in his note on early sculptures and also illustrated by late Prof. Banerjee".



The plaque from Kondamotu is made of limestone and contains six figures, a central Nrisimha in theomorphic form seated on his fours with an uplifted penis. The additional human hands with *Kankanas* (bracelets) are added to this and carry a *gada* and *chakra*. Two standing figures of Kartikeya and Vishnu flank this image. The two-handed Kartikeya holds ■ weapons *Sakti* in his right hand the *Kukkuta* in his left. A two-handed Vishnu stands in *Samabhanga* and holds ■ *Sankha* and the right hand is held in *abhaya-mudra*. He wears a crown similar to the one worn by the figures in the Amaravati and Nagarjunakonda sculptures. On the right of these figures, Rama holding a bow and arrow stands cross-legged in *tribhanga*. Balarama, wearing *kundalas* and a typical Amaravati, head gear holds his wine cup. Lastly, perhaps *kalki* is shown holding a sword and ■ shield in his hands.

The delineation of the figures in the drapery, ornamentation etc., is typical of Amaravathi school of art and therefore cannot be far removed in date from the third and fourth centuries A.D.

20. Sarkar, H., *History of South India*, ■ 563.

21. Ibid.

22. S.I.I., Vol. XVI., No. 296

#### Chapter - 5

1. These two structures are popularly known as *Egura* (Upper) Ahobilam and *Diguva* (Lower) ■ Temples.

2. ■ 1916, the approach road existed only upto the 5th mile.

3. Local people believe ■ is a hoard of ■ the stone. Many ■ tried to remove the stone, ■ vain. Another belief is ■ the priests used ■ water from the periodical springs underneath, to the temple.

4. S.I.I., XVI, No. 296

5. Ibid., No. 174

6. E.I. Vol. XXXVIII, Part. VII, ■ 339-340.

7. *Inscriptions of Andhradesa*, Vol. II. Part - I, Guntur, No. 472, P. 274.

8. ■ Vol. 100 (S.A.), *Ahobilam Kaifiyat*

9. S.I.I., Vol. XVI, No. 53

10. Ibid., No. 155

#### Chapter - ■

1. Ronald M. Huntington, *Avatars and Yugas: An Essay in Puranic cosmology*, *Puranam*, vol.VI, No. 1, 1964, p.18.

2. Buddha's function according ■ Puranas is purely negative.

3. Ronald M. Huntington, *Avatars and Yugas: An Essay in Puranic Cosmology*, *Puranam*, Vol. VI.No. 1, 1964, 1133-37.

4. C. Sivarama Murthi, *Geographical and Chronological Factors in ■ Iconography*, *Ancient India*, ■ 6(1950) P.30.

5. The presence of symbolic figure of ■ is significant. Narasimha ■ visualised for the first ■ in the combined aspects of Lakshmi-Narasimha, representations of which occur in the ■ sculpture of ■ Cholas and subsequent periods in large numbers. The plaque, therefore, may be said to represent the earliest form of the concept.

6. Krishna, ■ among ■ of Vishnu, ■ worshipped as a child, a young man etc. forms fit for exhibiting the various kinds of *bhakti*, or love, as for instance, that of a mother for her child, that of a wife for her husband and that of a friend for a friend. Due to this feature, Krishna, is specially likable to the Srivaishnava psyche and hence varieties of Krishna, including ■ find depiction in ■ Srivaishnava temples.

7. Gopinatha Rao does not give details of the six-handed *sudarsana- chakra*. However, there is a passage in the *Purushottama Samhita* (VII. 40b-42a) ■ mentions slightly different attributes for the six-handed Sudarsana (H.D. Smith 1969 ■ 582).

8. Interestingly enough many of the sculptures of gods and goddesses depicted here are more general in type showing only their essential features. Very few of them are completely in accordance with the *agamic* prescriptions.

## Chapter -7

1. The credit for systematization of the pujas in Sri-Vaishnava Temple to Ramanuja.
2. Sadhu Subramanya Sastri, in his *Tirupati Devasthanam Epigraphy Report* summarises formulation and systematization of temple worship by Ramanuja his followers, P.87. ff.
3. Raman, K.V., *Sri Varadaraja Svami Temple*, Kanchi, New Delhi, 1975, P.35.
4. Ramesan, *The Tirumala Temple*, Tirupati, New Delhi, 1975, P.35
5. F.O. Schrader introduction to *Pancharatra*, Madras, 1956.
6. S.I.I. Vol. XVI. No.174.
7. S.I.I. Vol. IX. No.577.
8. S.I.I. Vol. XVI. No.165.
9. S.I.I. Vol. X. No.814, Mack, Vol. (SA) 251, P.122.
10. S.I.I. Vol. XVI. No.263.
11. Ibid., Nos.159, 165, 169 and 188.
12. Ibid., No.174.
13. Ibid., No.165.
14. The *sathagopam* is a round vessel, made of silver or brass, with small figures of foot-prints of god Vishnu, drawn together on the outer apex of the vessel. It is always kept in a plate before 'utsava idols' of the god, in such a way the foot-prints are visible to the devotees, wherever the god goes out of the sanctum, the *Sathagopam* follows him. The devotees visiting the temple are blessed by the touch of *sathagopam* upon their heads, which is considered as keeping the feet of the god on their heads in humility to gain blessings from Him for spiritual merit material prosperity and longevity. This service of the temple is done by the priests without any distinction of caste creed.
15. S.I.I. Vol. XVI, No.296.
16. Mack. Vol. (S.A) No.100, *Ahobilam Kaifiyat*.
17. *Parivattam* means a cloth of the god is tied on the head of a devotee as a mark of honour for the recognition of his services to the Lord of the Temple.
18. K.A.N. Sastri, *The History of South India*, Madras, 1956.
19. S.I.I. Vol. XVI, No.155.
20. Interview with Chikkudugaya Ranga Charya, a scholar in sanskrit, Hyderabad.
21. Ibid., ("Kartika dipam danam tubhya samprapte namah").
22. *Purushottama samhita*, Adh.27.  
*"Kartikyam vahini naksatre, (Kartika naksatram)*  
*Rohinyam vapare ham*  
*Pournamasyam lagne,*  
*Diparohana macharet".*
23. S.I.I. Vol. XVI, No. 159.
24. Ibid., No.53.
25. Ibid., No.159.
26. Vol. (S.A) 251, P.111
27. S.I.I. Vol. XVI, 263.
28. Mack. Vol. (S.A) 251, P.111
29. Ibid., PP.111-168.
30. S.I.I. Vol. XVI. No.159.
31. Ibid., No.169.
32. Ibid.

33. Ibid., No.188
34. Ibid., No.235
35. Ibid., No.248
36. Ibid.
37. Ibid., No.261
38. Ibid., No.310
39. A Report on Epigraphy, 1915-16, Sl. No. 76, P.65.
40. Vira Raghavacharya, T.K.T, *History of Tirupati*, Vol.II P.658.
41. S.I.I. Vol. XVI, No.155.

#### Chapter - 8

1. *Ahobilam Temple Records* checked by Government Auditors of Endowments Department
2. Ranga Charya, K., *The Srivaishnava Brahmanas*, Madras, 1931.
3. D. Swamy Iyyengar's, manuscript, *A Descriptive History of the Forgotten shrines of Ahobilam*. (Madras, 1916) preserved in Tamil Nadu Archives,
4. S.I.I., XVI, No. 248
5. Ibid., No. 260
6. Ibid., No. 263
7. Ibid., No. 299
8. *The Administrative Record of the Lower Ahobilam Temple*, B.O.No. 632, dated 21/6/1946.
9. Vide G.O.No. 6639 20-12-1949 maintained in the Board's records of the Lower Ahobilam Temple.
10. Ibid
11. S.I.I. XVI, Nos. 248, 257
12. Ibid
13. Ibid., Nos. 199, 200, 235 & 257
14. For see.A. Surya Kumari, *The Temples in Andhra Desa* unpublished
15. S.S.I. XVI, No. 109
16. S.I.I. XIV, No. 174
17. Ibid., No. 199
18. Ibid., No. 235
19. D. Swamy Iyyengar, paper manuscript *A Descriptive History of the Forgotten shrines of Ahobilam* (Madras, 1916) preserved Tamil Nadu Archives,

#### Chapter - 9

1. S.I.I. XVI, No. 248
2. Ibid., No. 53
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid. No.
5. Ibid., No. 169
6. Ibid., No. 174
7. Ibid., No. 181
8. Ibid., No. 199
9. Inscription recording the repairing work of tanks and canals refer to *dasavanda* or *dasabandha* which means one tenth. Imposing 1/10 of tax on the land irrigated under a particular tank and giving that amount to the person or persons who repaired the tank is *dasavanda* according to Iswaradattu. D.C. Sircar explains *dasavanda* in ways (a) *Dasavanda* is 1/10 of the total produce of the lands under tanks, wells and canals and should go to the people who attended to the



## APPENDIX - I

### LIST OF INSCRIPTIONS FROM UPPER AND LOWER AHOBILAM TEMPLES (TEXTS)

#### No. 1

- 1 Brami [4°] Śrīmat-
- 2 Kṣīr°uttivā(r°)mna-Aṇi-
- 3 vāritull-i-ṇ
- 4 Pri(ḷḷi)thivī-Vāpa-ā-
- 5 julum-l'arameśvāgum
- 6 okkaṇa unṣi parai-
- 7 vāṇu Rapavīja-
- 8 yunṣa Kuḍalūra iruvadi-
- 9 ēsa maruṇṇuṣṭu pauna<sup>ka</sup>(na)
- 10 Vēgi-pāṣa Duggaya-
- 11 ka-iccheṇṇayadi nṇyagu-
- 12 ) karapaḷbugānu [4°] Quṇḍya-
- 13 pāṣu Duḷḷa-pāṣa Nigama [11]
- 14 gi-jāvuru Koṭigi-jāvuru Vē-
- 15 buḷa-Poda-Konṇa-jūṣu-Dāsa-
- 16 ṭi Kēṣakuḷu Kṣāṇḍu indaṇu
- 17 garapa[th]bugānu ā boḷpāḡiri [1°] di(dī)ni
- 18 jaṇḇhinavāṇu Vārapāi vēvura pā-
- 19 ṣu vā kaviḷaḷu vā guḷḷu vā sūṣu-
- 20 vuḷu jaṇḇhinava(vā)ṇu [1°] kaṣṭurkun
- 21 kēṣapā<sup>ka</sup>ṇḷbu
- 22 P-ṣina-nā-
- 23 (u) Periaḷ-
- 24 miyarikī
- 25 ṭṭh°ḇhinā(na) pā(pa)-
- 26 nṇavina [1°]

- [illegible]

- 30 ಗವಯ್ಯಂಕವನಿಂ . . . . . ವಪ್ಪ ಗಾಕುಚಕ್ರನರ್ತಿ ಪಿರಿಯಗ್ಗ-  
31 ನಾಗ್ ಮುನಿಶೈವನುನಲ್ಲಿಯು ಮಂಗಾಡನ ಯಮುನಿಯಮು-  
32 ಪ್ಪಯ್ಯಾಯದ್ರಾಪದಾರಣಮನಾನಾಮಾಣಾಡಪವಮಾಡಗುಣಾ-  
33 ನಿಲಕುಪವನು ಗುಂ ನಿಗಣ್ಣಾ ಭೇಷಣಲೋಕನು ಗುಂ ಲಗ್ನಿ ಪ್ಪೋ-  
34 ಮಾದ್ಯವೇಕ . . . . . ಗಮಾವಪ್ಪನಮ್ಪನವಪ್ಪಿ ಭೇಷಣಯು ಸು-  
35 ಕಳವೇದವ್ಯಾಯಪ್ಪಯನಯಜನಯಾಡವದವನವನಿಗ್ಗ-  
36 ನವಪುಕಮ್ಪುನಿರಾಗುಂ ಮುನಾವಿಪ್ಪರ ಗುಮುನಗಾಕುಮದ್ಧ-  
37 ಮಾಗ್ಗರಂ ಶೀಲಭಾವನ್ಮಾರಾಯಗಾಕುಚಕ್ರಾಂಬುಜಪ್ರಕಾರಾಕುಚ-  
38 ತಾಂಕುಚಕ್ರಾಕುಂ ಶೀನಿಪ್ಪ ವಪ್ಪಗಮುನಾಕುರಾಂಭೂಡಾ ನಿದ್ಧವಾ-  
39 ದಿಕ್ಕಿ ಗಂಗೆಯ್ಚಿ ಜನ್ಮ ಪರೋಣನಿರಯಯಂ ಚಕ್ರವರ್ತಿ ಕವಿಮಾಣ್ಯನಮಾ-

- 40 రావారూపగారు బతుయ్యగనరిబతురాజు-
- 41 మోవరప్ప మోతుల రాజుల కల్పితయల్లియ బతుస్సెమయిలగాని-
- 42 ధనిధానవైష్ణవసాని నిర్మలగోభగ్గనగిట్టయిం పరమ-
- 43 స్వగదత్తియగి ధారాపూర్వకం మూడి కలకట్ట ధర్మమనా-
- 44 రామనలదవగు గంగయిలం వాయాగయిలం వారణాసియిలం
- 45 సాసిర కవితయుమం సాసిబ్బగు నేదపారగరుమనలద పూత-
- 46 కృ శలువరు || స్వదత్తం పరదత్తం నా యిల గరలతి వసుంధరం సస్మిన్వశన-
- 47 నరదాగే నిష్కాయం జాయతే క్రిమి[క] || మద్వలకహం పరమం-
- 48 పరివంకబా న పాపాదర్శనమనలం భువి భావిభలపా || యే
- 49 పాలయంతి మమ ధర్మమిమం స[స]స్యం కలహం మయా(ం) నిగజితంబు-

### No. 3

Part of the inscription

- 1 స్వస్తిశ్రీ [కవయంబు] గంగాపిం
- 2 గళ నంవత్తక మామ...
- 3 .... తథః [యద] వాగమనః || స్వస్తి
- 4 శ్రీమదకమమ... .. తిమదాహః స్వస్తి
- 5 నమస్త గుణాంకారః | రంతుమయయా
- 6 రికారః | విశ్వుగణవిక్ర[ం] రికారణదక్షడి
- 7 ఇరుకాదం | అగనోగ్గంక | అనయ.
- 8 మంకళికరగంక | కాయరేకోయగంక | అద్వికాన
- 9 త్యద్ధిం హేమాద్రి దానవిరత | వ్రతావరిపాంశ
- 10 ....కహరంబరణ | రూపనాయక
- 11 ం నారాయణ | రుణంబిమ | అవగిమిర
- 12 దానవకతరామ అనేక నగరోవకంక వ్రతిస్తా
- 13 విరిమవిరా
- 14 రామ | నంగడిత్తి
- 15 పాం | అగరక్షపాం
- 16 అగరగోపాం | గు
- 17 అరతద్ధివిలా
- 18 రాహుతి యగ్గం విలా
- 19 శ | కరవాగ్నైవశేయ
- 20 అంకిరవివత వ్యాళ
- 21 తిమిలదగ్గంవిలా
- 22 అరవరతరత్నానా
- 23 గ్రహర రూపేనాం
- 24 కనోమపాన | శ్రీ

- 25 వనరాహాహోంసిమి [ఁ]  
 26 తపోహిత : వందా  
 27 మువరివృత : గంఠం  
 28 టానినాద : వడితతివ  
 29 ఎనినాద : కుండివడి [క]

- 1 దివ్యరయ్యస్యవి | రామనారయ్యత  
 2 యోమల్లయగమారమ్మగ న్యోస్య  
 3 వికారయితాఃగిరిత్రవన [ఁ] త న  
 4 రిచేలమగు శ్రీ పుష్కరాహారసస్యమి [గ]  
 5 హంగుమనః కుహనియగు చి  
 6 రమంద్రవం [ఐ] అనేక న్నవినిరంఘగు వ  
 7 క్యస్థిత [ఁ] రనావృ డ్ధింది జగనాబ్ధిగంఠ  
 8 స్సవేమ భూవిరుని కళ్య [త] రమ్మగవిరవ  
 9 త్రి : నకం చిక్కుం నిండి సోద్రమై అరం  
 10 ద్రవారకఃస్థితిన వికారనరం రి : కాంకరాగ  
 11 మ మంద్రదీపావిరూరి : దందిరాదాయం  
 12 ద్గళ్యమ్మ వందరిక్షంరామనమ [దు]  
 13 ం చంపిమగ ఎటంద మల్లనా బృంద  
 14 కవత్రమాగ [ఁ] రతుంఘావన్నయరెడిం  
 15 గారికి పుణ్యముగాను శ్రీ [ద].....  
 16 రమ్మగము శ్రీ.

## No. 4

65. శ్రీగిరి రవ్యహో -  
 బంగిరి హ్యపాన  
 మాగా 08 ర్  
 విభాహో రవిహో నవాతన యత్ర -  
 ందావం టాతలే || 100 || ప్రాచార



- 1 కుభవమస్తు ఏరత్యురామరాధీశమారి శేషవిరాజితం | అవరోహం-
- 2 లక్ష్మీపీఠావ్యవృత్తి దేవదేవవ్యవృత్తి | వ్యవృత్తి శ్రీశక్తవహంబులు గరితం ౧౩౩౨ ౧౩౩౩ నే-
- 3 ంటి విశ్వవిద్యారంభ మార్గశిర కు గు గు వారానమ ప్రతిభావంబుదేవత ని-
- 4 ర్య అవరాహం కొమరగిరిరెడ్డింగారి ముక్కరముగాను కాటమరె-
- 5 డివేమారెడ్డింగారు కలువచేటు కొమరగిరిపుర మని చారిత్రాసి
- 6 నమవ్వగా సేసి | పచ్చ కాటయకొడే పోత్రో మారవ్య కాట-
- 7 కృపమాను | వీరాన్న పోరవ్యవరే కామారా జయిలి వేమయిచాల | కొ-
- 8 మరగిరియ్యంగారిని పరమహితుండైన కాటమరెడ్డివేమారెడ్డింగారు క-
- 9 నకు పావయి అభవ కొమరగిరియ్యంగారిని చారి దేవులైన అమ్మంగారు-
- 10 లకున్న అమయమృతముగాను దేవగ్లభున్న బ్రాహ్మకున్న చారిత్రా-
- 11 శి ఇచ్చిన కొమరగిరిమండలం | వెదకొమరగిరిపురం | అమ్మలపురం |
- 12 శ్రీవారాహవిశ్వేశ్వరదేవత కొమరగిరిపురం | శ్రీవర్యవారని కమర-
- 13 గిరిపురం | కిరియ్యంగారు పరమహితుండైన కొమరగిరిపురము | పంగులూరి ధీ-
- 14 మయంగారి కొమరగిరిపురం | శ్రీకృష్ణరయంగారి కొమరగిరిపురం | కంచాళయ-
- 15 గారి కొమరగిరిపురం | శ్రీంగారరామని కొమరగిరిపురం | శ్రీనవ్వవరపు రావ-
- 16 య్య కొమరగిరిపురం | మురందేశ్వరదేవత కొమరగిరిపురం | శ్రీపుల కమరగిరిపురం | సా-
- 17 ర్యకుల కొమరగిరిపురం | పాళ్లవారి కొమరగిరిపురం | సామవేదాల కొమరగిరిపురం | సా-
- 18 మాజ్యుల కొమరగిరిపురం | పానావలివల్లభున్న కొమరగిరిపురం | శ్రీగోపినాథునిఅచ్చుర
- 19 మరగిరిపురం [1] బ్రహ్మయ్యశ్రీపాదాల కొమరగిరిపురం | తేజోమూర్తుల కొమరగిరి
- 20 గ్లభు మారితారావారి కొమరగిరిపురం | మహాదేవయ్యంగారి కొమరగిరిపురం | వేమ-
- 21 గారి సింగనసోమయాళుల కొమరగిరిపురం | జలసము పెద్దిరాజువారి కొమరగిరిపురం | మండ-
- 22 య రామనాథసోమయాళులవారి రుద్రభట్లమూరుభట్ల కొమరగిరిపురం | గ్రామాశ్రీకుల
- 23 గిరిపురం | అన్నచానం అచ్చభయంగారి రామనంగారి కొమరగిరిపురం | పలనవల్లి అత్త
- 24 కొమరగిరిపురం | శ్రీహరంవిరఘంబు శ్రీగిరియ్యంగారి కొమరగిరిపురం | విసపాలపెద్ది
- 25 . . . కొమరగిరిపురం . . . పోరాజువారి కొమరగిరిపురం | పుత్రయపె-
- 26 చివ కొమరగిరిపురం | పుండరాజువారి రెడ్డిగొమరగిరిపురం | వేదాద్రిశ్రీవ
- 27 కొమరగిరిపురం | కూదిరాజు తిప్పనంగారి కొమరగిరిపురం | అరాఘ్యుల మల్లభంగారి కొమ-
- 28 రగిరిపురం | చేయేటి శ్రీశేవనాథని కొమరగిరిపురం | కాండ శ్రీనరసింహుని కొ-
- 29 మరగిరిపురం | మొవరేరిప్పల కొమరగిరిపురం | జాయూరి సోమయాళులవారి
- 30 మల్లభట్ల కొమరగిరిపురం | శింగయపండితులవారి విశ్వనాథపెమ్మని కొమరగిరిపురం | శి-



- [illegible]

## No. 8

**Text**

- [illegible]

## No. 9

### TEXT

1 శ్రీ కుటమమ్మ : కేవలశివారోహణం పై కర్మవికార(వ)ములందుకుండుం [అయిదు] శ్రీరాజ  
 పంపావ్య కేవలశివారోహణం : పుష్టి శ్రీఅయోధ్యురయ శాలివాహన కేవలశివారోహణం గు  
 [మత] అగునట్టి [మన]మతసంకల్పం బిల్లుక కు గు . . . [ప్రముఖాధి]  
 కాక కావలెనుకల్పం శ్రీమద్రామాంశ శ్రీ [అయ్య]కేవలశివారోహణం పుష్టికావ్యం  
 కేయమందుగాను శ్రీమద్రామాంశముననుసరించి : శ్రీమద్రామాంశ [రాంక]ప్రతిష్ఠాప  
 కావలెనని చరమపాద పరిభాషా -

■ తాద్యులయిన శ్రీమద్రామాంశమునందున్న శ్రీ అవోంకపాదసంకల్పములను తెన్న తిరుమల  
 రాజయ్యరాం అధికారి వికలం తిరుమలముగానుండు [అధికం]రా[యం] శాస్త్రవగ్గోత్ర  
 అవ్వలాయనముకల్పం యశస్వినికావ్యములైన . . . వికలం అనంతవారి  
 . . . . .

■ [అవోంక]యందు [తిథిగణాలు] కేవలశివారోహణం [అధికం] గింతె కళ[గ] గా అమరపరి  
 . . . . . రోహణం [గింతె] అమల గింతె . . . . .  
 . . . . . అవలంకావలెననిగాను పదభుక్తి[మ] గంభీరము అని ఇచ్చిన [పరా]  
 భంజక కావలెనని : యా భంజకములు .

■ Damaged.

## No. 10

1 కుటమమ్మ పుష్టిశ్రీ అయోధ్యురయ శాలివాహన కేవలశివారోహణం గు . . . అగునట్టి ప్రవా  
 కం . . . . . శ్రీ రామ కేవలశివారోహణం

2 గింతెయందు కల్పింపబడినదాదులైన . . . పుష్టిశ్రీ అయోధ్యురయ శాలివాహన కేవలశివారోహణం గు . . .

■ అవలంకావలెననిగాను . . . భూతపాదు ప్రవృత్తికావ్యములను కొనా  
 రుండు [రా] . . . . . చ్చిన రోహిణియను నమకావలె  
 క్రమ-

■ పుష్టియందు [ప్రవాహ] . . . [కల్ప] . . . కుమ ముఖయం రోహిణియను నమకావలె  
 అవలంకావలెననిగాను . . . . . మహిమయి యందుకు  
 కేవలశివారోహణం [ప్ర] . . .

5 [రా]య కేవలశివారోహణం [మందపాద] అధికం కల్పం . . . ముఖయం రోహిణియను నమకావలె  
 యందు . . . . . Damaged అధికం [కల్పం కేవల]  
 . . . . .

6 . . . . . కేవలం నమహిమయి యిచ్చిన గ్రామం అ-  
 వలంకావలెననిగాను పదభుక్తి

- 1 కుకమయ్య : యెకమ్మరామరాధిక మోక్షశ్రేణి విరాళితం [10] అయితు శ్రీ స్వపింహ్య-
- 2 వ్య దేవదేవ్య కావనం : దేవశ్రేణి శిరోరత్నం పై త్యర్చివ మూలములం : అయితు శ్రీ స్వపింహ్య-
- 3 వ్య దేవదేవ్య కావనం : వ్యక్తిశ్రీ అయోధ్యదయ కాలిదాస కవచశాసనములు గ[12] అగుదేటి
- 4 వైద్య వంశవర్గ అట్టిం 2 లు శ్రీమద్వహరాజాధికారా సరమేశ్వర శ్రీ 11-ప్రకాశ శ్రీ 11-
- 5 క పరాపితదేవ మహారాయలు విర్యావగరమందు తత్వ పింహాసనామాయుడందు
- 6 వైద్యపాంశ్రాఖ్యం సేయుచుండగాను వ్యక్తిశ్రీ తమదశాభవనాధికార శ్రీ అహో-
- 7 [11] వీరభావపింహ్యదేవుని దిగ్విభ్రమశ్రీని సేయమాట కాత్రిక సోమ[వారం] నాటి[11]-రాత్రి మహావృతానమును సేయ
- 8 మార్గ వృత్త వర్ణన 111111 వర్ణనకావ్యము అష్టదిగ్విభ్రమంను అరగింపులకు పొదిపూలు పిడి 11 వద-
- 9 పం గట్టర శివశి కావ్యమాత్రం 111 వ్రంశూకం యశాశ్వాశాఖ్యములైన గుడియచెల్లారి పుగవయ్యంగు
- 10 8 పాక్షకుడు 111111య్యంగారి పుత్రుండు ఉగ్గరయ్యంగారు శ్రీ అహోంశేష్యుల శంభా రావకు క్రయం వర 111111య్యంగు-
- 11 యం సర్వ శింపురాను అరగింపు 1111 కట్టడక్రమం 111111య్యంగువనకు . . .
- 12 . . . . . పుణ్యానానకు . . . . . [విద్య]-
- 13 0 మ [11] రెల్లం సె : పోంకలు 11 అట్టి 11 శిరుశ్శూనామందు దియ్యం మ గ [మిలాకు] 11 [11] 111
- 14 నాకు సేయ . . . . . పోంకలు [11] 1111 1111 1111 . . . . . దియశక్తి[11]లకు మూనె . . . . . గం 8 . . . . . కు దియ్యం . . . . . సేయ

Incomplete

- 1 ద్రుశ్రేణి వీరరత్నం : పై త్యర్చివమూలములం[10]
- 2 [అయి]కు శ్రీస్వపింహ్యవ్య దేవదేవ్య కావనం[10]
- 3 వ్యక్తిశ్రీ అయోధ్యదయ కాలిదాస కవచ 1111 -
- 4 శ్శాసనములు గ[12] అగుదేటి శివ వంశవర్గ వైత్ర కు[11]
- 5 11 శ్రీమద్వహరాజాధికారా సరమేశ్వర శ్రీవీరప్రకాశ శ్రీ
- 6 పరాపితదేవమహారాయలుంగాడు విర్యావగరమందు తత్వ పిం -
- 7 వ్యవహారాయుడై ప్రతిపాప్రమాఖ్యము సేయుచు
- 8 ముంజంగాను : శ్రీమదశాంతాదోటి బ్రంహ్మండ-
- 9 నాయకులైన వేరవేరాంకదేవ్యులై 11 పురాణపురుషోత్తము -
- 10 పై వ శ్రీహోంశేష్యుల దివ్యశ్రీపాదవరణావహరములకు
- 11 దేశ భాషామహామందు అగ్రతేయగోత్రపరివృంధై 11 నోమ -
- 12 సోశాధియై వై 11 శ్రీమ(ం)వ్యవహారములశేషర వంశ్యాం 11
- 13 అశాంతయ్యదేవ మహారాయలుగారి పాత్రుండు వరసింగయ్యదేవ -
- 14 మహారాయలుగారి పుత్రులైన దివ్యపుకళయ్యదేవ కు -
- 15 పోరాజులుగారు వర్ణనయకయక శ్రీని అవంతములైన వా -
- 16 111111 దండ్లములు వమస్విగాంచియైన భూదాన తమశాసనవర్ణ-



1 మతమయై : దేవశ్రేణి శిరోరత్నం రై శ్రద్ధవిమలమూర్తిః] అయమే శ్రీ వరసింహస్వామ్య  
దేవదేవస్య కావనం : పుస్తక శ్రీ అయాభ్యుదయ కాలిదాసావ శతవషణ్ణులు గు[ప్ర]గు  
తేటి హిమ్య నందవర్క పాల్లెలు కు : లు శ్రీమం(క)మహారాజారిరాజ రాజవరమేళ్యక  
శ్రీవీరప్రకాశ శ్రీవీర నరసింహదేవమహారాయలు : శ్రీమహారాజుల [రత్నసింహాస్థాన  
వాయుమయై] పురివిహంగ్రాణ్యం నేయుమందంగామ : శ్రీమతే రామామాయనమః  
శ్రీ[వేదమాగ్ని]ప్రతిష్ఠాప్ర[హం]రాధ్య వరమహానందపరారాధ్య వేదాంతారాధ్య  
రై న శ్రీ మత్ శతగోపత్యుంహగామయై అవోబంధానవాయుమ శ్రీమహామహామంద  
శేఖర కొండ్రాచ చినదిమ్మయ్యరేవమహారాజ కార్యకర్తరై న పుగ్గురుమంగారుమ్మ  
అధికారాయమ్మ గాగెవగోత్రం అనంతలూకం యశశ్చ . . . . .  
పాశ్చరై || [లింమయదేవమహారాజులగారి పుత్రరై న అపుత్రరాజులగారి ఇచ్చిన క్రయ  
దూరావరమకావనకమ మెట్లనమ

2 . . . మీరు శ్రీ అపుత్రశేఖరులకు తిరువందవనం వారిక : పోకమాంకులు రామచంద్ర  
కొండు మామిళ్లు అరంట్లు పవనమాండలు [వేయి]కేయి అందుకు అలమూరి కలహరి అంగద్రాజు  
గారి కలవిత్రిమాన్యం అలమూరమ చెతే తేని ప్థలం . . . . . దు వారిదేవమ క్రయం  
పుచ్చుకొన్న తేమ లు బుమ్మ [అచా]మ శ్రీ అపుత్రశేఖరుల తండాచానమ [రై]  
అంగద్రాజ మాన్యం ప్థలం నగరి [మిత్త]యూ దేవీ యీదుగామ అలమూరమ గోరిమాకుం  
తేనికళం || లు బుమ్మ మది అచామ శ్రీ అపుత్రశేఖరుల శ్రీకందారం పొలం యూ  
ప్రశామ శ్రీ కందారానకు క్రయం ఇచ్చినది న గ ల నలుపై యెనిమిది వరకలంకుం శ్రీ  
కందారానకం బుచ్చుకొని మీకు క్రయం యిచ్చిన తేమ లు యెనమంతుము పుత్రయం  
. . . . . పహాగామ తేమ ల గల ను మది [అచా]మ అకరాలామ తేమ  
పుట్టెందు ముత్తముంమ్మ మది . . . . .

|| నిందవనం వారికేయి పోకమాంకులు మామిళ్లు పాండుచంద్ర కొండు అరంట్లు వేంంయ్యం గల  
చారు యూ కొండునక వచ్చేవం యేమి గరిగినా అందవటుమ అపుత్రశేఖరులకు పాలు గ  
న్ని యూ కొండు పేనే కొండులు అన || పాశ్చరై ౨ తెలామమ్మ నిదవనంవారిక ట్లు  
తెలంగద్రాజులనమ అలమూరిమాన్యం మది [అచా] పలం వడ్లుపేసిన కాంపుకు పంకీరు  
వంగిగామ కవమ పగంపారిక వచ్చిన || వడ్లలోమ [నం]క్రాంతి[ప్ర]తిష్ఠాకు మహాశక్తి  
చాలమ అలమూరిక అవోబంధ్యులు వేంయ్యనవారు మీమ వేంయ్యన కొండు లోపం  
మ అరిగింకే తరిగెకు అముమందరి నియ్యం గు అందుకు రగిన దోష[హ్మ]రా:లమ్మ  
చెలలు కరియమందు తెలు మొదలై నవి తేమపుకు మీతే తేయింపుగంచారు .

1 శ్రీకురుమయై : శ్రీ వారపంక్తిహయ నమః [యేవమ్మ]రామరాజీ మపుత్రశ్రీదేవిరాతం :  
అవోబంధ్యులపంక్తిహయ దేవదేవస్య కావనం : దేవశ్రేణి శిరోరత్నం : రై శ్రద్ధవిమలమూర్తిః  
అయమే శ్రీ వ్యవసాయ దేవదేవస్య కావనం : పుస్తక శ్రీ అయాభ్యుదయ కాలిదాసావ  
శతవషణ్ణులు గు[ప్ర]గు తేటి హిమ్య నందవర్క పాల్లెలు కు ౨ అ శ్రీమద్రాజా రిరాజ

2 రాజవరమేళ్యక శ్రీ వీరప్రకాశ శ్రీ వీర నరసింహదేవమహారాయలు : విద్యావగరమందు కన్న  
సింహాస్థానవాయుమయై పురివిహంగ్రాణ్యం నేయుమందంగామ : పుస్తక శ్రీ కవచకామవహ  
రీశ్వర శ్రీ అవోబంధినవారశింహాదేవవి దివ్యశ్రీపాదవర్ణంబులకు : అశ్రేయగోత్ర  
అనంతలూకం యశశ్చ రాధ్యామయమయినో] హమ

3 పహాశ్చక్రబంధు : శ్రీమం(క)వహామందశేఖర రామరాజు గోపేటరాజులగారి పుత్రుండు  
కోపయదేవమహారాజులుగామ అనంతమై వందములు పమహంవి యిచ్చిన శ్రీ రామా  
మయకొండు కవచానకు ప్రపాద క్రయానకు గుచ్చిన పొడిపొడిగ్రామ క్రమమెట్లంమ్మమ  
పహాశ్చదేవమహారాయలు మాకు వాయంకరానకు పొలింపిన దూపాటి పమహా.

4 ఏ గొరికెత్తె గ్రామం (1) అహోబిలమందు దీక్షకరించెనని (2) కామమూసూటమ (3) తైళ్లపాటు అరగింపి అండ్లమ పరాచితకేమమోకాణము పొందిన కామకామం (4) అహోబిలమును (5) కల్యాణానంద నమస్కృతం ప్రతి గాథ ఈ గ్రామం ౧౬: ౩౩ ముద్ర

■ [కు] యీ వంశపుత్ర కాశ్మీరం అవధ్యుగాను ప్రభువంశేత్యుల ప్రభువారాను యీ గ్రామం ముప్పిరంబి ప్రభువంశేత్యుల దిగువననుట కొరం ముప్పిరి తమరీధి ప్ర కావ్యుగాను ముప్పిరి ప్రభావూనుమూనును కర్ణాటకం విజయం ౧౧ గా దిగువననుటని పరాలవారాయ అవధం అమె -

[illegible]

7. . 1961 మార్చి 25న గవర్నరు విశేష కమిషనుకు విధానగతాను, యీ మంత్రివర్గ  
 తన గాన పేరునకు అదేనామినీ యీ ప్రభుత్వమునకును యిచ్చే అందుకు  
 క్రియాశీల పనులొచ్చిన తూర్పు సీమలోని, గౌరవనీయులు కొంతమంది  
 ప్రభుత్వమునకు అనుబంధము (1) అనునంతయు (2) -

3. [1] కాచాకను యీ గ్రామం పేరువల్లం ద్రివి యీ పట్టణం అవలద్దాక్కోస్తే అగామి శ్రీ  
 బ్రహ్మం నడవలగలది : శ్రీ భక్తవల్లభులు పుట్టా మరకతామసాలవం [2]  
 పరకతామసాలే పుడ భం విప్రులంతకే : కావసాలవ యొమ్మక్కల్యే కాచాప్రేయో  
 మసాలవం [3] కాచాక పుగళమరార్యో శాలవారయ్య -

॥ ० పదం : పుష్కరాం వరకరాం వ్యా యోహానో పయందరా[०:१] పుష్కరాపక(०)పహాప్రాణ  
విజాయాం తాయతే [ప్ర:१] .

## No. 16

1. 0 గుణమయ్య = శ్రీనరకుంపస్వామి వమః = దేవుని ఆరాధన. ౪.

2. ಉತ್ಕೃಷ್ಟವಿಮಲಾ[೦೨]ಕುಕಂ: ಜಯತು ಶ್ರೀವರಸಿಂಹಾಭ್ಯ ರೇವತೇಭ್ಯಾ ನಮಃ[೦೨]

[illegible]

■ ప్రమాదీన సంవత్సర ప్రావణ ౨ ౧౦ ౧౧ శ్రీమద్భాగవతము వారి-

6 చరమేశ్వర శ్రీనిధి చక్రవర్తి శ్రీనిధి వరాహదేవరాయమహారాయ.

■ ಉದಾಹರಣೆಗಾಗಿ ಕಲ್ಪಿಸಿರುವ ಉದಾಹರಣೆಯು ಬ್ರಹ್ಮವೇ.

7 యుక్తమంత్రగాను పుట్టి (1) వెనుదూరకువనారీశ్వర క్రియవోరక వీరనాకమంత్ర-

■ కేసుని దివ్యశి, సరళా శనివారం బుధము కాశ్యపగోత్రం అవధులయ్యాక-

|| ॐ नमो भगवते वासुदेवाय ||

10 వ తేదీ 1960 ప్రతిపక్షం కురువేటి తిమ్మరాజుగారి వద్ద -

మూల రూపుల న ట్టుకలగారి పుష్పరై న వెంకటాద్రియమహా-

కామయ సర్వీసయతయత క్రింది పాస్టాంగ అనంతయత -

|| 3 || దండములు పనునొందియిచ్చిన శివామందపం పాలెవ్వును ౪ -

14. కృతావధానము మేలగునని సాక్షిమి గానమిచ్చినది తిరుకతిరు -

15. మహాశివరాత్రి ఉత్సవం ప్రాజెక్టు పరిమితిలో ఉంది.

■ **ఆంధ్రప్రదేశ్ సర్కారు** ప్రకటించిన ప్రకటన -

17 వేద [6<sup>వ</sup> యుగ] తొలగు ముందు [2] గల దేవతల గురించి వ్రాసిన-



■ ప్రకారం వరమింటి అట్టుగాను ప్రేమించుచున్న ధర్మకావనం : ౧[౧]

■ త మువత్పర ముగోశానీర ల మ లు క్రిస్తుచాళా .

ಕಾಸವಾಂನ ಹೊಸ ಶಿಕ್ಷಣ ಕೇಂದ್ರದ ಸ್ಥಾಪನೆ

(౧)మహావ్నీ ౧ పాలవాడయ్యవద్దవుచు.

**TEXT :**



- వజ్రహంసావతారులై పురివిరాటప్రాంతం శేయుమందంగాను [వృత్తి] శ్రీమతులూకవనా-  
 7 దీర్ఘత శ్రీమహావిభవదేవతావ్యాసేషు దివ్యశ్రీపాదపర్యారాధకంయవ శ్రీమహావ్యాసం అపిస్తం మహా-  
 ■ శ్రవ యశాశ్చార్యార్యయంయవ మార్యహోర్యమయవ శ్రీమహామహామందేశ్వర . . .  
 ■ వ్రజ్జనరాజుగారి పావ్యై వ నందిరాజుగారి పుత్రులై ■ ■ ■ దేవమహారాజులుగా-  
 10 దు అనంతములై ■ దండములును నమహంవి యుచ్చివ్ర ] . . . స్థానాలోమ ■ ■ ■ అవ-1

No. 20

TEXT

- 1 ■ [బ్ర]శమస్త [ః] దేవశేషహోర్యం లై ద్యుద్విమలంగామకం ■ ■ -  
 ■ ■ శ్రీవజ్రహంసార్య దేవదేవ్య రావం [ః] వృత్తిశ్రీ అమాత్యురయ ■ ■ -  
 ■ రావం వ శవనమయలు గా[రాం] అగునేటి కాళియై ■ వంవత్సర మోగోశర  
 ■ టం య శ్రీమద్రాజారిరాజవరమేశ్వర శ్రీవిభవరావ శ్రీవీర వరాశిమహా -  
 5 రాయలు విద్యావగరమందు కత్తభ్రంశిస్తావతారులై వృద్ధిప్రాప్త్యాం శేయుమంద -  
 6 గాను శ్రీమతే రామానుజాయ నమః శ్రీమదేవమాగప్రతిష్ఠారార్య వ -  
 7 రమహంస పరిచారకారార్య వర్తకలవస్తవలత పురియై వేరాంకారావ్యులై -  
 8 వ శ్రీవరాంకర శ్రీ ■ కళగోపతయ్యుగారి ముద్రకళలై వ ముంజెరుమారు -  
 9 తియ్యంగుచ్చి శ్రీరావో[ః]శం స్థానంబాయుచ్చి శ్రీమవ్యూహమంద శ్వర రామరాజ్శిరు మం -  
 10 రాజులదేవమహారాజయ్యువారి కార్యకళలై వ పుగ్గయ్య . . .  
 11 . . . కార్యహాశ్రం అశ్వలాయమూత్రం [రుకు]శ్శాశాశ్చయ్యు[ః]లై వ మార్యహంస -  
 12 ర్యం శ్రీమవ్యూహం మంద శ్వర శ్రీప్రభక్తా[ః]మల్ల కుశిలేటి వ్ర[వ]నదేవ వోదమహా -  
 13 రాజుగారి పావ్యయ వోబురాజుగారి పుత్రుండు తిమరాజుగారి ఇదే వ్ర[మంద] -  
 14 వ్ర[వ] రావివోటు రమణాచనక్రమమెల్లన్నను శ్రీరావో[ః]శ్వర్యులు దిగ్విశిరు -  
 15 6 వగరి రో[ః]క్షణంపు కాగన అంబి[దా] మిరుగటంబి చదవారు కం -  
 16 6 మందపావను శ్రీరావో[ః]శ్వరులు వగరిమంది దిగ్విశు పేరేపి  
 17 అవ్రూలను దిగ్విశిరుపరిమంది వగర్చి వదన అంబు శ్రీరావో[ః]శ్వరులు చి -  
 18 [ ■ కట్టడి] మగి [పూటలు] గల వెళ్ళ . . .  
 19 దియ్యం ■ పుతయం దియ్యం అగి రో[వగ] ■ [వెయ మ గా ర] శేక్కు . .  
 20 ఏ శా కి రో పేర్లు అగి వెయ మం ■ అగి రో[వగ] . . [విమయ] -  
 21 ■ [మావె] - రో[వగ] వ గి రో . . యాల్కులు ■ . . [రావల] -  
 22 2000 కి అకుల[గం] కి గంధం వా రగ రివం . . . రో తిరుమంగళాద్వి రగ-వెయలెరుకు] . . . రూ  
 ■ వం ■ ■ అంబు పూటలకు . . పేరేపె పూటలు [వగ] వగ అచ్చి . .  
 25 మివారు జ్ఞముపేయవరే నిమిషం లేర్చు పూట గి ■ ■ . .  
 ■ వెయల అగి రో పుపు మ గి రో వెయ మ గి . . పేర్లు . . ■ అగిలెయం -  
 27 య 2000 కి [కరకా]యలు . . రో [వగ]రాయల రో వదవపు పే . . కేకు 20 .  
 28 1 రో వెయల పి పి రో రో[వగ] 2000 కి అకులు ■ ■ గంధం వ వ కి  
 29 రో ధూపం మ కి వ్యయ[ం]పాకులు రో వలలెరుకు రో తిరుమంగళా -  
 30 విల మేదరకా[వగ] రో తిరుమంగళా రో తిరు . . గాచ్చి రగ రో[వగ]రాయల రో -  
 31 మే[వగ]ముకు రగ [వెవమో[వగ] రో వేవంకూరి . . ■ అంబు ■  
 32 గా అంబు రో[వగ]ము మే గి పూటలు గా . .  
 33 పూటలు గా ■ ■ గ [వెవమ] క్రయం రో[వగ] వ గ [ః] రోలుగు .  
 ■ వాటి పేమహామ మికు పురియై రెల్ల పేమహామ గ్రామావకు రు -  
 35 1000 విశకులు తెల్లం వరిగడ్డపేద ప్రకం వేమ కాలపాలి అ వాల్కు -  
 ■ పుట్టు లేనిది గు వ్ర రో[వగ] మే గి వగ అం అకలామ వలలై . . .  
 37 . . రో[వగ] మేమ గుచ్చేపముది యా రమణం పి [పు]త్రరావో[ః] -  
 38 రంజ్యంగాను అంబుప్రార్థనామ వం వరవగళారో[ః] ఇది గిచ్చి - 38 వ గమ[ః] రంజ్యం[ః]

TEXT

- 1 క్రమశే రామామయై నమః క్రీరామ
- 2 కుశమయై కృష్ణమరాధీశహృదేనారాధితం అహో-
- 3 క్రోధ వృక్షంధ్రావ్యత కేవలేశ్వ కావహః పృథ్వీ అయాశ్వరక్షయో రాధివా-
- 4 నాన కవచమంబులు గలవః అగ్రో కేల వృద్ధి నెన్నెత్తెత్తోర పుష్కలం బు క్రీ-
- 5 మవ్యవరాధారాల రావరమేశ్వర క్రీధిరప్రకాశ క్రీ-
- 6 వీర వరాధివదేవమహానాయకు విద్యావగరమందు శక్తిపింహ్యరథా-
- 7 దూరులై వృద్ధిపామ్రాజ్యము శేయుతుండంగాను స్వప్రకృతి తమ-
- 8 కుఃప్రకృతిగారీశ్వర క్రీఅహోబల వీరవారపింహ్యదేవుని దివ్యక్రీపారవర్ష-
- 9 ంబులు అక్రేయగోత్రం అపస్తంబాశ్రమం యజ్ఞాభ్యాసాభ్యాసయ-
- 10 లై న హేమవంశోద్భవులై న క్రీమవ్యవమండలేశ్వర బాటూ-
- 11 కి క్రీలకాగారి బౌద్ధులు గోవరాజబాగారి పుష్కలు గోపవాత-
- 12 రాజగారు క్రమమై న దండములు నమహించి యుచ్చిన
- 13 దవము హరివోటు క్రమమెల్లన్నను క్రీ అహోబలేశ్వరుల దిగవ
- 14 తిరువతి బ్రంహ్మోదవరదుల బోధకను నవీరిని తెరువరి అక్షేయ-
- 15 మూల నమివమున గటించిన వాలుగు కంఠాల మండపావ-
- 16 ను క్రీ అహోబలేశ్వరుల మహోత్సవకాలాలను మహోహరాలు అ-
- 17 తగిలెన్పు కటదలేశ మేము క్రీఅహోబలేశ్వరుల క్రీరందారా-
- 18 మ్మ యుచ్చిన బొంతు మేలిన గ అంబుల మూర్తుల వరహాలు అకరా-
- 19 లామ ఇమ్మూరు వరహాలుమ్మ క్రీఅహోబలేశ్వరుల క్రీరందారా-
- 20 మ్మ కెల్లించి మేము క్రీరందారానను క్రయం పునుకొన్న నవీమది
- 21 తెందుమత్తకల్పంబు పాశ్వని తయ్యకీరద నర్భవ్య గుర్తకు
- 22 తేకే నది మమకాను గిగి మదివ్వల మమకాను పురయం తెం-
- 23 దు మమకానిట్టి వచ్చిన ఫలం నల్ల బ గిగి క్రయంబొంతు న గ అం
- 24 అకరానాను యుచ్చై వరహాలును నమహించి అ
- 25 మీదను అరగింపు కటద లేశవ దివ్య తిరువీధులు నెంచేత పూ-
- 26 లు గిగి మహోహరాల నది గిగి దియం మం మిమన శేల్ల మం
- 27 నెయ్యిచిట్లు తెల్లం నది మిరియాల వాలుచిట్లందు యాత్రా-
- 28 కిగిగి యెత్తు బొంతులు మి అయి అ మ్మ ఇతెను పూటలు
- 29 కి దియ్యం బంబంబు గిగి క్రయ్యం గ అంబు మిమన శేల్ల అంబు
- 30 గిగి మిమములు బంబంబు క్రయం అంబు నెయ్యి
- 31 అంబు అంబు గిగి గిగి మిరియాల ము అంబు కిరియాల-
- 32 లా న గిగి గిగి తెల్లం దివ్య అంబు గిగిగి - బొంతులు అంబు
- 33 కిరియాల గిగి గిగి గిగి స్వయంబావమ్మ గిగి గిగి
- 34 క్కుమ్మ గంబు మిదిదండేచార్యక మిమమందోదంబేచార్యక అంబు
- 35 అంబు గిగి గిగి అంబు బారివోటు దివ్య క్రయంబొంతు గిగి అంబు
- 36 అంబు ఇరులై వరహం నెంబుమ్మ క్రీఅహోబలేశ్వరుల
- 37 మహోత్సవ కాలాలను తిరువీధులు తెల్లం
- 38 అరగింపు కాయంగంచారు అ గ్రమం అంబు పురహాక్ర-
- 39 పాదంబర్హంగాను అరంధ్రాభ్యాసాహంగాను నడవగం-
- 40 వారము అ అరిగించిన మహోహరాలు వివియోగం
- 41 బారివోటు వాగ్దేవకాగం నాందిని మూర్తికి ఇప్రమి

Text .

- 1 కుశమమ్మ : దేవత్రేని శరీరకర్మం దైవ్య ద్వివహూయ -
- 2 శంఖయకు శ్రీమహానిహ్యకర్మ దేవదేవ్య కామం : యశమమ్మ -
- 3 రామరాజీ కుమార్త్రేనివికాశం అహోంకార పుం -
- 4 హ్యకర్మ దేవదేవ్య కామం : స్వప్రకృతి యోగ్యురయ -
- 5 రామరాజీ : కళవహూయలు కళా అనిదేవ మ -
- 6 యదురి నంవత్పర మామమ్మ : కుమార్త్రావారిరా -
- 7 రామ పరమేశ్వర శ్రీవీరవ్రతాన శ్రీవీర : కళవహూయ -
- 8 మహారామలు విశ్వానగరమందు ప్రవహింహ్యు -
- 9 హదూయం దైవ్యదేవ్యమోహం శేయుయం -
- 10 దామ శ్రీమతే రామామతాయ [వ]మ్మ : శ్రీమదేవమా -
- 11 గంధర్వవికారాశ్య పరమహంస పరివారకారా -
- 12 కర్మ పరకర్మకర్మకర్మ పరయ : రామరాజ్య -
- 13 దైవ శ్రీవరాంకుశ శ్రీ : కళగోపయ్యంగారి ము -
- 14 క్రకర్మ శ్రీరామామతయ్యంగారిమ్మ శ్రీఅహో -
- 15 : స్థావరాదుమ్మ శ్రీమహావోమంధరేశ్వర [రా] -
- 16 మరాళ తిరుమలరామయ్యదేవ మహారాజం -
- 17 య్యచారి కార్యకళాంయన ప్లగ్గయ్యంగారుమ్మ పా -
- 18 మహాయీ అహ్యుమ్మ విశ్వామిత్రగోత్రం అశ్వ -
- 19 : మూతం దుఖస్యాధారాధ్యాయురై న మార్యం -
- 20 : కర్మపురై : శ్రీమహావోమంధరేశ్వర దోచిరా -
- 21 రామరాజంగారి పత్నీకులు వోబ్రాజంగారి పుత్ర -
- 22 : వోబ్రాజంగారి యిచ్చిన క్రయం శంకృతకామన క్ర -
- 23 మహేష్వరమ్మ శ్రీఅహోంకేశ్వరుం దిగువతిరువతి -
- 24 బ్రహ్మేశ్వరమరులు దేవదేవపుండి తిరువతిని కాగ్గ -
- 25 : తిరువున పంపాకురాంకా కోచిలలోమ అకు -
- 26 కాంక అరగింపుంకురామ మేము వగర క్రయం -
- 27 ఇచ్చిన మది మరుకు : వ గ గంధ పరహంకార -
- 28 : మీరు శ్రీ అహోంకేశ్వరుం శ్రీశంకారాన -
- 29 కు తెల్లించినరోం మది వ గ : అకరారా -
- 30 : అయ్యమ్మ]కు పరహంకారు మేము శ్రీశంకారా -
- 31 కకు తెల్లించుకొంటిమి గనక దొంపిరెది తెరు -
- 32 పుక క్రయం ఇచ్చిన మది పాశ్చని తెరువుండ -
- 33 చింతించెయ్య పరకమ కామరసవారి కరణ -
- 34 : [కా]మయ్య తింశుయ నూహ్యనకు : అది -
- 35 గామ కాళచారి [కే]మమాశ్యం మోయమ మీకు క్ర -
- 36 యం ఇచ్చిన మదిమరుకు : : మరుకు -
- 37 : కా మదిమ్మ మీరు క్రయం పునుకొని : : కోచి -
- 38 కు పమహంకార్మి యిందువల్ల శ్రీశంకారానకు -
- 39 : గట్టకరేప వట్టు ఎగిరి మరుకు : వట్టు అ -
- 40 అయ్యకు పుట్ల వట్టెయ్యకు వట్టె వట్టు : వం ఇ మున -

- 41 య పుష్కరమున్ను శ్రీశంకరాచార్యులు కావాలి -
- 42 కొని యా వర్ణనలవల్ల శ్రీశంకరులచేత అగి -
- 43 ఎది అగింపున ప్రసాదం ముగియకు శ్రీశ్రీ శ్రీశ్రీ -
- 44 బుద్ధుల కట్టకలేక విమిశ్రుత శ్రీశంకరశాస్త్రము -
- 45 శంకరశాస్త్రమున వేదాంతముల అగింపున -
- 46 యదే పుష్కర ది... శంకరులు వదిలె ముగియకలెద -
- 47 కు శాస్త్ర కలెద... శ్రీశంకరులచేత శాస్త్రము -
- 48 శ్రీశంకరులు... శంకరులు వదిలె ముగియకలెద -
- 49 శ్రీశంకరులచేత శాస్త్రము... శ్రీశంకరులచేత శాస్త్రము -
- 50 శ్రీశంకరులు... శ్రీశంకరులచేత శాస్త్రము -
- 51 శ్రీశంకరులు... శ్రీశంకరులచేత శాస్త్రము -
- 52 శ్రీశంకరులు... శ్రీశంకరులచేత శాస్త్రము -
- 53 శ్రీశంకరులు... శ్రీశంకరులచేత శాస్త్రము -
- 54 శ్రీశంకరులు... శ్రీశంకరులచేత శాస్త్రము -
- 55 శ్రీశంకరులు... శ్రీశంకరులచేత శాస్త్రము -
- 56 శ్రీశంకరులు... శ్రీశంకరులచేత శాస్త్రము -
- 57 శ్రీశంకరులు... శ్రీశంకరులచేత శాస్త్రము -
- 58 శ్రీశంకరులు... శ్రీశంకరులచేత శాస్త్రము -
- 59 శ్రీశంకరులు... శ్రీశంకరులచేత శాస్త్రము -

## No. 23

1

- 1 శంకరులు... శ్రీశంకరులచేత శాస్త్రము -
- 2 శంకరులు... శ్రీశంకరులచేత శాస్త్రము -
- 3 శంకరులు... శ్రీశంకరులచేత శాస్త్రము -
- 4 శంకరులు... శ్రీశంకరులచేత శాస్త్రము -
- 5 శంకరులు... శ్రీశంకరులచేత శాస్త్రము -
- 6 శంకరులు... శ్రీశంకరులచేత శాస్త్రము -
- 7 శంకరులు... శ్రీశంకరులచేత శాస్త్రము -
- 8 శంకరులు... శ్రీశంకరులచేత శాస్త్రము -
- 9 శంకరులు... శ్రీశంకరులచేత శాస్త్రము -
- 10 శంకరులు... శ్రీశంకరులచేత శాస్త్రము -
- 11 శంకరులు... శ్రీశంకరులచేత శాస్త్రము -
- 12 శంకరులు... శ్రీశంకరులచేత శాస్త్రము -
- 13 శంకరులు... శ్రీశంకరులచేత శాస్త్రము -
- 14 శంకరులు... శ్రీశంకరులచేత శాస్త్రము -
- 15 శంకరులు... శ్రీశంకరులచేత శాస్త్రము -
- 16 శంకరులు... శ్రీశంకరులచేత శాస్త్రము -
- 17 శంకరులు... శ్రీశంకరులచేత శాస్త్రము -
- 18 శంకరులు... శ్రీశంకరులచేత శాస్త్రము -
- 19 శంకరులు... శ్రీశంకరులచేత శాస్త్రము -
- 20 శంకరులు... శ్రీశంకరులచేత శాస్త్రము -
- 21 శంకరులు... శ్రీశంకరులచేత శాస్త్రము -
- 22 శంకరులు... శ్రీశంకరులచేత శాస్త్రము -

మొదటి పేజీ: 1-11 అవుతుంది దిగువనుండి 1-11 ము.





- [illegible]

- 1 . . . . . తిరుమల . . . . . పది . . . . .
- 2 . . . . . యిచ్చిన గ్రామాలిహోట ప్రమమెట్లన్న మే నరావినదేవమ-
- 3 వారాయల ముకు నాయక రావకు ~~.....~~ రారితె ప్రిమతో-
- 4 వి (వి)బారి గ్రామం గది శేఖర ~~.....~~ ౧౦౦ అక్షరాలామ తక్కు (ముమ్మారు)
- 5 వరహంబున్న యీ సువర్ణర కా త్రిక అరణ్యగ్రామ శ్రీఅహోబలేశ్వరు
- 6 శ్రీరంగారావకు గ్రామం వసువికాంబి పారిపూటగట్టక వివరము: . . . వగ.
- 7 గి తెరుచిన కేయించిన తిరువరవనము . . . గట్టించిన వరహం వ్రంహాం-
- 8 మండరావమ శ్రీఅహోబలేశ్వరులు ~~.....~~ మీరమండి వహమహోద్యవా-
- 9 ఎమ కేంకే పూటయం ~~.....~~ తిరువతిమండి విధిమిది: కేంకే పూటం-
- 10 మ . . . . . య గది అరగించే పూటలు ~~.....~~ పూట గది ~~.....~~ రియ్యం ~~.....~~
- 11 పెనులు ~~.....~~ అరేడలు ~~.....~~ పురు మ గ ~~.....~~ . . . అచాలు
- 12 . . . . . రెల్ల . . . వంకరార ~~.....~~ చమ్మహిత

No. 26  
TEXT

- 1 బుచ్చిమట్ల: కేవల శివశక్తిం: శ్రీ వ్యర్థసమటంబులం: అయ-
- 2 తు శ్రీసృష్టివేదము: దేవదేవు: శాసనం: పుష్కరి శ్రీ మహావిష్ణుడు
- 3 కాలికావన శకవరుషంబులు గుంట అగ్రసీత తారణ సంత-
- 4 త్వర వైకృత గు ~~.....~~ శ్రీమద్రాజాధిరాజ రాజవరమేశ్వర
- 5 శ్రీవీరవ్రతాని శ్రీవీర శ్రీసంగిరాయదేవమహారాయలు-
- 6ంగారు పెనుగొండ వగరమండి వ్రణంహోవహాభూతులై పు-
- 7 తివింబ్రాహ్మణ సేయమండంగామ శ్రీమతే రామామహాయ
- 8 నమ: శ్రీమదేవమాగ్రప్రతిష్ఠావచారాధ్య వరమహంబ ~~.....~~
- 9 వ్రాణకారాం: వర్ణకంఠ్రస్థంబై పుణ్యవేదా వ్రా[క]రాయులై -
- 10 న శ్రీ[క]రాం శ్రీ సంగిరాయ శివగారి శ్రీకార్యకర్తలయిన ~~.....~~
- 11 కారవం(రం) శివ్యగారున్న శ్రీమద్రాజాధిరాజ రాజవరమేశ్వర
- 12 శ్రీవీరవ్రతాని శ్రీవీర శ్రీరంగరాయదేవమహారాయల అయ్యవా-
- 13 రి కార్యకర్తలయిన రావప్పగారున్న శ్రీఅహోబలేశ్వరం వారున్న
- 14 శాశ్వతగోగ్ర బుష్టానాగ్ర యలకాభార్యాయులై న శాశ్వతం-
- 15 శోభిస్తులై న వియరాయకలవవళంబర గుత్తిహంబిల్లరగండ యెుర-
- 16 యూరి పురవరాధీశ్వరలై న శ్రీమన్మహామండలేశ్వర కొండ్రా తి-
- 17 మరాజగారి వస్తులై న తింమండ్రింగారి పుత్తులై న వెంకట్రామ దేవ-
- 18 వోదమహారాజులంగారి యిచ్చిన శిలాకావనప్రమమెట్లన్నమ
- 19 వ్రాదు బహురావ్య సువర్ణరావ విధురాముచారు హంకేహాని తూ-
- 20 తుగొని శిమలంకా నరాచారావట్టి అహోబలేశ్వరమ వచ్చి
- 21 అహోబలేశం అంకా హంబిశి అహోబలేశ్వరం ~~.....~~ [అ]రు యె-
- 22 ంజ్ఞు రమవళం కేమళ అగ్రుంచి నడకప్రాపుండ్రి నిమిత్తం శ్రీ ~~.....~~
- 23 వగోబలేశ్వరులు సంతానం ప్రహరించి[ని]న అదిమమయిన వం శకగో-
- 24 న శివ్యగారి: యేదోతరమై శ్రీపురుషోత్తమ బ్రహ్మచారు-
- 25 ం ప్రతిష్ఠిపి ముకుందదేవులే పూజగిని రామామండలేశవో-
- 26 థ్వాంబులై న శ్రీవరాంబులమహాముని శివ్యలై నమునంట శ్రీ సంగ-శ-
- 27 గోవప్పగారు వ్రళం యీ తిరున అయిన నిమిత్తం శ్రీరంగరాయ-
- 28 దేవమహారాయల సముఖావకు ~~.....~~ మీరు యీ తిరున
- 29 రత్నసంహారాదులై వుండిన మీ మంబూమి అయిన అహోబ-
- 30 లేశ్వరుల వ్రళం మరుసాక్రంతం అయిపుచ్చిది కాది ~~.....~~ అక్రొ-

No. 27  
TEXT

TEXT

- 1 తేవ్యుడే లోకంబుం ది ప్పట్టనములగుం గుండు : అనుడు శ్రీ వ్యం-
- 2 హుడ్య తేవ్యేవోవ్య కావనం : యోగ్యుర్రామరాధి హాశ్రేణిరా-
- 3 తేవ్య అవోవ్యవరంహావ్య తేవ్యేవ్య కావనం : వ్యవ్యత్ర
- 4 అయోవ్యవయ అవోవ్య వయ్యవయ గు
- 5 ౧౭ తేవ్యేవ్య వయ్యవయ వయ్యవయ [కు] ౧౭ తేవ్యేవ్య కా-
- 6 దిరా తేవ్యేవయవయ్యవయ తేవ్యేవయవయ తేవ్యేవయ వయ్య-
- 7 అవయరావయవయవయవయవయవయ వయ్యవయ-
- 8 వయ్యవయవయ వయ్యవయవయవయవయవయవయ వయ్య-
- 9 వయ్య వయ్యవయవయవయ వయ్యవయవయవయవయ వయ్య-
- 10 వయ్యవయవయవయ వయ్యవయవయవయవయ వయ్య-
- 11 వయ్యవయవయవయ వయ్యవయవయవయవయ వయ్య-
- 12 వయ్యవయవయవయ వయ్యవయవయవయవయ వయ్య-
- 13 వయ్యవయవయవయ వయ్యవయవయవయవయ వయ్య-
- 14 వయ్యవయవయవయ వయ్యవయవయవయవయ వయ్య-
- 15 తేవ్యేవయవయవయవయ వయ్యవయవయవయవయ వయ్య-
- 16 తేవ్యేవయవయవయవయ వయ్యవయవయవయవయ వయ్య-
- 17 తేవ్యేవయవయవయవయ వయ్యవయవయవయవయ వయ్య-
- 18 తేవ్యేవయవయవయవయ వయ్యవయవయవయవయ వయ్య-
- 19 తేవ్యేవయవయవయవయ వయ్యవయవయవయవయ వయ్య-
- 20 తేవ్యేవయవయవయవయ వయ్యవయవయవయవయ వయ్య-
- 21 తేవ్యేవయవయవయవయ వయ్యవయవయవయవయ వయ్య-
- 22 తేవ్యేవయవయవయవయ వయ్యవయవయవయవయ వయ్య-
- 23 తేవ్యేవయవయవయవయ వయ్యవయవయవయవయ వయ్య-
- 24 తేవ్యేవయవయవయవయ వయ్యవయవయవయవయ వయ్య-
- 25 తేవ్యేవయవయవయవయ వయ్యవయవయవయవయ వయ్య-
- 26 తేవ్యేవయవయవయవయ వయ్యవయవయవయవయ వయ్య-
- 27 తేవ్యేవయవయవయవయ వయ్యవయవయవయవయ వయ్య-
- 28 తేవ్యేవయవయవయవయ వయ్యవయవయవయవయ వయ్య-
- 29 తేవ్యేవయవయవయవయ వయ్యవయవయవయవయ వయ్య-
- 30 తేవ్యేవయవయవయవయ వయ్యవయవయవయవయ వయ్య-
- 31 తేవ్యేవయవయవయవయ వయ్యవయవయవయవయ వయ్య-
- 32 తేవ్యేవయవయవయవయ వయ్యవయవయవయవయ వయ్య-
- 33 తేవ్యేవయవయవయవయ వయ్యవయవయవయవయ వయ్య-
- 34 తేవ్యేవయవయవయవయ వయ్యవయవయవయవయ వయ్య-
- 35 తేవ్యేవయవయవయవయ వయ్యవయవయవయవయ వయ్య-
- 36 తేవ్యేవయవయవయవయ వయ్యవయవయవయవయ వయ్య-
- 37 తేవ్యేవయవయవయవయ వయ్యవయవయవయవయ వయ్య-
- 38 తేవ్యేవయవయవయవయ వయ్యవయవయవయవయ వయ్య-
- 39 తేవ్యేవయవయవయవయ వయ్యవయవయవయవయ వయ్య-
- 40 తేవ్యేవయవయవయవయ వయ్యవయవయవయవయ వయ్య-

- 41 ము నిలిచి పుత్రుడు పరత్రాసు నిలిచియు వ్యాసుడు తోట  
 42 పేరచాటిని తోమారులు గలచాటిని యేత్రు గ్రామ తరహాయ్యు  
 43 పుత్రుల అనుచుతోడిమిది నియమిత్రాసు తేద్యచాటి తోట  
 44 గ్రామ తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట  
 45 యీ తోటతోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట  
 46 తమతరహారం యీ తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట  
 47 ది యిది యిది తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట  
 48 తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట

## No. 29

- 1 తమతమ తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట  
 2 తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట  
 3 తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట  
 4 తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట  
 5 తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట  
 6 తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట  
 7 తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట  
 8 తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట  
 9 తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట  
 10 తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట  
 11 తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట  
 12 తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట  
 13 తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట  
 14 తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట  
 15 తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట  
 16 తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట  
 17 తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట  
 18 తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట  
 19 తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట  
 20 తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట  
 21 తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట  
 22 తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట  
 23 తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట  
 24 తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట  
 25 తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట  
 26 తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట  
 27 తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట  
 28 తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట  
 29 తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట  
 30 తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట  
 31 తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట  
 32 తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట  
 33 తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట  
 34 తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట తోట

**TEXT**

- 1 స్వస్తి శ్రీ యోగ్యుడయి గావతాశ్చ కవచములు గలుగు ॥౧॥  
2 సోమ్య సంచత్తర శ్చే ౧ ౧౦ కుక్రవాశ్చ శ్రీమద్భాగవతాశ్చ కావతశ్చే-  
3 క్వశ్చ శ్రీవీరప్రభావ శ్రీవీరవెంకటవెలియదేవమహారాయణమ్-  
4 వాదు సేమగోంద నగంమందు ప్పజ్జంబోవనాచూరులై పృథివీసామ్రా-  
5 త్తము చేయుచుండగాను స్వస్తి శ్రీ తమకుభావనారీశ్వర శ్రీమదభిరామగోపా-  
6 ల్పాదంబులుపై న శ్రీ అవలోకిత వీరభాగవత్పూజనీయ దీప్తి శ్రీవరనారసింహం-  
7 బ్రహ్మసేవ ప్పరమహారి గావతాశ్చ వామ్య స్వస్తి పశు ప్ప బద్ధిప్రశ్రీప్తి సహితులై న పర-  
8 భువాంశుమలై ॥ శ్రీ శరీశ్వర శ్రీభాగవతవేద ప్పశ్చ శ్రీపారవగ్ధా-  
9 రాధమ్మ న కావతాశ్చ వామ్య పావిత్యులై న శ్రీరాప్రీరాధార్య అభిరాధార్య-  
10 పాకటాంబులన ప్పైతరీత్రాధిపతులై న సేమగోందపుష్పరాచీర్జ్యులై న  
11 గోకనాథులువచ్చుచు న ప్పదవరావారీశ్వరులును చివరకు వారావరీ-  
12 యులును పర్యవారీశ్వరులును కాప్రీశ్రీశ్రీశ్రీమహానిలయులును వీరభాగవ-  
13 తామలై ॥ శ్రీరాప్రీశ్రీ మోటయేలంబు వీరభాగ్యములకును పుంజ్యుగా-  
14 మ మూర్తికి వీరగయగోమానులు దుండ్రయ తండం పమింబంది కులంబా-  
15 ॥ వెన్ను పంజే శ్రీ అవలోకేశ్వరుల ప్పరమేశ్వరుల ప్పరమేశ్వరావకు  
16 వామ్య అపొంక కళలు పడుంపు దింజావరులు సెందుంపు  
17 గావతాశ్చ వగటిని పమింబందిన వీరం ॥ అరటి తనమగిల కొమా-  
18 రుందు ప్రస్తుతుకటిని ॥ సేపాద్రి కొమారులు గంగయాను నవ క-  
19 రుదు పమింబందిన కళలు ॥ దింజావరులు ౨ కళలతో ప్పెల్లలు  
20 గావతాశ్చ ॥ విదూర వేంకటగిల కొమారులు లింసువ కళలు  
21 ౧ రోలా మల్లయ కొమారులు తమమమ ౨౨౧ ౧ రేవె-  
22 ట మరీగిల కుమారులు రోశమగిల కళలు ౧ రావమరుగు లిం-  
23 గయ కుమారులు వరువయ కళలు ౧ మూర్తిగిల్లి రెన్నయ కు-  
24 మారులు పావయ కళలు ౧ మూర్తిగిల్లి అన్నయ కుమారులు  
25 లింగిగిల కళలు ౧ అంతు కలగాయ ౨౨౧ ౨ ౨౨౧  
26 ప్పశ్చ ప్పశ్చ ప్పశ్చ ప్పశ్చ ప్పశ్చ ప్పశ్చ ప్పశ్చ ప్పశ్చ ప్పశ్చ ప్పశ్చ  
27 ౧ ప్పశ్చ ప్పశ్చ ప్పశ్చ ప్పశ్చ ప్పశ్చ ప్పశ్చ ప్పశ్చ ప్పశ్చ ప్పశ్చ ప్పశ్చ  
28 ౨౨౧ ౨౨౧ ౨౨౧ ౨౨౧ ౨౨౧ ౨౨౧ ౨౨౧ ౨౨౧ ౨౨౧ ౨౨౧

1 కుభమస్త్ర పరశ్శురామరాధీకహరి శేషిరాజతం । అహో-  
2 బ్రహ్మపిహ్యస్య దేవదేవస్య కావచం । వ్యస్తీ శ్రీకేశవమంబులు గరితా అను న-

|| యి విష్ణునిపాదపూజ మార్గ-శిర కు గు ను వారాము శ్రీహరియచేతన ని-

|| త్వ అహరాహు కొమరగిరిరక్షింగార్చి మహాకముగాను కాటకురె-

|| క్తి దేవారక్షింగారు కలువచేతు కొమరగిరిరక్ష మని చాచుటాని

|| మహాకముగా ౩౩౩ క న్తు కాటయకొరే పాత్రో మారవ్య కాట-

7 వ్యవసూను । పీరావ్మ పోరవ్యవతే కామూగా జయిరి వేమరుపాట । కొ-

|| మరగిరియ్యంగార్చిని పరమహితుండున కాటమరెడ్డవేమారెడ్డింగార్చు త-

|| నకు హ్యదు అభవ కొమరగిరియ్యంగార్చిని వారి దేవులైన అమ్మంగారు-

10 లకున్న అమ్మయనుకృతముగాను దేవగ్లభున్న బ్రహ్మలకున్న చాచుటా-

11 శి ఇచ్చిన కొమరగిరిమండలం । వెదకొమరగిరిపురం । అమ్మలపురం ।

12 శ్రీవారాహసి శ్రీవ్యవరక్షత కొమరగిరిపురం । శ్రీవర్మనారసి ముం-

13 గిరిపురం । పంకులూరి పరుకరయంగారి కొమరగిరిపురము । పంకులూరి శి-

14 మలయంగారి కొమరగిరిపురం । శ్రీభట్టరయంగారి కొమరగిరిపురం । కంచాళయ-

15 గారి కొమరగిరిపురం । శ్రీగారరాయని కొమరగిరిపురం । శ్రీనవ్వకరపు కా-

16 య్య కొమరగిరిపురం । మురందేశ్వరదేవ కొమరగిరిపురం । శ్రీశ్రుల కుమరగిరిపురం । పా-

17 తిమ్మల కొమరగిరిపురం । పాల్లచారి కొమరగిరిపురం । పామవేదాల కొమరగిరిపురం । పా-

18 మాకోడ్యల కొమరగిరిపురం । పానావతివల్లభన్న కొమరగిరిపురం । శ్రీగోవిందాభునిఅబ్బర

కొ-

19 మరగిరిపురం [1] బ్రహ్మమ్యుక్తిపాదాల కొమరగిరిపురం । వేదోమూర్తాల కొమరగిరి-

పురం । కా-

20 గ్గరపు మాదిరాజువారి కొమరగిరిపురం । మహాదేవయ్యంగారి కొమరగిరిపురం । వేమ-

పానకం-

21 గారి సింగనపామయాల కొమరగిరిపురం । తిలవము పెద్దిరాజువారి కొమరగిరిపురం । మండ-

22 య రామనాథపామయాలవారి కుడభట్టుమారుభట్ల కొమరగిరిపురం । గ్రామాశ్రీమం

కొమర-

23 గిరిపురం । అన్నచానం అప్రభకయంగారి రామనంగారి కొమరగిరిపురం । వలవల్లి అప్ర

భకభట్ల

24 కొమరగిరిపురం । [శ్రీ]వారందీరఘంట శ్రీగిరన్నంగారి కొమరగిరిపురం । వివహలపెద్ది

కొమరగిరిపురం ।

25 . . . కొమరగిరిపురం । . . పోరరాజువారి కొమరగిరిపురం । పుత్రాయపె-

26 ద్దిక కొమరగిరిపురం । పుండ్రాజువారి రల్లా[వె]గ్గడకొమరగిరిపురం । వేదాద్రిశ్రీమ

నిహ్యదేవర

27 కొమరగిరిపురం । హరిరాజ తిమ్మనంగారి కొమరగిరిపురం । అరావ్యల మల్లభంగారి కొ-









28 రగిరిపురం । వేదాది శ్రీశేవవాభుని కొమరగిరిపురం । కాళాండ శ్రీవరసిన్హాదేవ కొ-

29 మరగిరిపురం । యావోరసిన్హుల కొమరగిరిపురం । బాయూరి కొమరగిరిపురం ।

30 మల్లభట్ల కొమరగిరిపురం । శిరగాంధుపండితులవారి విశ్వవాళువమ్మకొమరగిరిపురం । శి-

# APPENDIX - II

## SUMMARY OF INSCRIPTIONS FROM UPPER AND LOWER AHOBILAM (Chronologically arranged)

S.No	Date	King	Location	Language	Summary	Reference
1	C.8th Century A.D.	 (744-755 A.D.)	Peddapeta Anantapur (Dt.)	Sanskrit	This inscription is engraved on a stone lying in a field to the east of the village Peddapeta which is a hamlet of Yadiki. Line 14-15 referring to the word Vobula	E.I. vol. XXXVIII Part - VII. Pp. 339-340. (A.R.Ep., 1958- 59 No. 823)
2	1124 A.D.	Tribhuvana maliadeva (Western Chalukya)	(On the slab set up to the west of the Siva Temple) Peddumudiya Jammalamadugu (Tq.) Cuddapah (Dt.)	Sanskrit and Kanarese	It refers itself to the reign of the Chalukya King  ruling from Jayantipura  his feudatory, the Mahamandalesvara Atyanchola, Maharaja, son of Sovanachola Maharaja and  Atyana's feudatory, the Mahamandalesvara Chiddana- Chola Maharaja is stated to have made a grant of the village Mudivemu to the Mahajanas of that place. The grant was  in the presence of God Narasimha deva of 	S.I.I. Vol. IX No.207. PP 208-209 (A.R.No.350 of 1905)
3	1378 A.D.	Proloya Vemareddy (1325-1353 A.D.)	Veerasaiva Mantapam Srisailam Kurnool (Dt.)	Telugu	An inscription in the Srisailam temple gives epigraphical confirmation of  history  Ahobilam	Inscriptions of Andhra desa, Vol. II, Part-I S No 472. P. 274

4	1378 A.D.	Reddy King Anavema (1364-86)	Upper Ahobilam	Sanskrit	Building of steps to Ahobilam, Probably this is an addition to the repairs to the former steps.	Copperplate inscriptions of Andhra Pradesh, Government Museum, Hyderabad. P.182
5.	1395 A.D.	██████ Maharaya II (1377-1404)	Upper Ahobilam	Telugu	The ██████ manuscript of Ahobilam kaifiyat also mentions an inscription (not discovered and ██████ so ██████ by epigraphists) referring to the construction ██████ Mukhamandapam in Upper Ahobilam.	Mackenzie Manuscript Vol.No. XXX
6.	1410 A.D.	██████ Reddy Vema Reddi (1402 - ?)	On the way to Pamuleli Narasimha Temple Upper Ahobilam	Telugu	States that Katama-Reddy Vema - Reddi made a gift of several villages to temples and Brahmins renaming those villages Komaragiriapuram in honour of King Komaragiri Reddi and also ██████ villages with the name of Vemavaram. It also states that Katama Reddi's wife Mallamma made a gift of Mallavaram to God Markandisvara of Rajamahindravaram	S.I.I. Vol. X No.577 PP. 319-320 (A.R.No. 84 of 1915)


















7	1515 A D	Sn Krishnadevaraya (1509 - 1529 A D)	On a slab set up at the entrance into the Narasimha Svami Shrine in the Narasimha Svami Temple Lower Ahobilam	Telugu	An inscription [redacted] by him [redacted] he visited the temple on his way towards Kalinga and offered the God, a necklace, a pendant of diamonds, rubies inset with emerald a pair of bangles covered with rubies, a golden plate and thousand varshas while his two queens Chinnu Devi and Trimala Devi presented a pendant [redacted] Village in Chagalamam was [redacted] gifted to the Lord for the Angaranga Bhogas of the Deity. The inscription also contains a mention of the exploits of Krishnadevaraya and gives his title as Purva Dakshina - Paschima Samudradhisvara, Yvanarajyasthapanacharya and Gajapatideva Vibhu etc	S II Vol XVI, No 55 PP 14-15 (A R No 54 of 1915)
8	1532 A D	Achyutadevaraya (1529-1542 A D)	Round the base of the central Shrines of the Narasimha Svami temple Lower Ahobilam	Telugu	It registers gift of lands [redacted] purchase [redacted] Ahobalesvara by Abbaraju, son of Gubbaraju Tipparaju of [redacted] gotra, Asvatayana-sutra, Rik-Sakha and a resident of Pourmamilla	S II Vol XVI No 96 P 111 (A R No 56 of 1915)
9	1535 A D	Achyutadevaraya (1529-1542 A D)	Round the base of the central	Telugu	The epigraph is damaged. It [redacted] to register [redacted] grant to Vithalam Anantappa by	S II vol XVI No 109 P 124

			Shrines of the Narasimha Svami temple Lower Ahobilam		Purushottama - Jyyar, of the temple and Vithalam Timmarasu, the agent of Chinna Tirumalarajayya for offerings to the God on certain <del>varahas</del> (Tithargas)	(A R No 55 ■ 1915)
10	1546 A D	Sadasivaraya (1542-1570 A D )	On the west wall of the ■ shrine ■ the Narasimha svami temple Lower Ahobilam	Telugu	The details of the date are ■ The inscription is damaged and fragmentary It seems ■ records a provision made for certain offerings ■ the deity ■ on some specified occasions ■ of the proceeds of a village obtained by him from king Achyutaraya and endowed for the purpose of the offerings by the son (name lost) of Bhutanatha Brahma - Jyoysa of Asvalayana- Sutra and Rit-Sakha	S II Vol XVI No 155 PP 163- 164 (A R No ■ of 1915)
11	1547 A D	Sadasiva Raya	On the North wall of the goddess in the Narasimha Svami temple Lower Ahobilam	Telugu	It records an endowment of 120 varahas into ■ temple treasury by Uggarasayya, Son ■ Ramarasayya and Grandson of Uggarasayya of Gudiya Chelluru and belonging to the Kasyapa- gotra, Apastamba-sutra and Yajus-sakha, stipulating ■ the interest accruing from the amount was to ■ spent for offerings to God Vira Narasimha of Ahobilam during the Kshirabधि ■ other festivals	S II Vol XVI, No 159, p 167 (A R ■ 58 ■ 1915)

12	1548 A.D.	Sadasiva Raya	On a Slab set up in the courtyard of the Narasimha Svami Temple Upper Ahobilam	Telugu	It registers the grant of the village Jambuladinne in Koyilakuntla-sima for providing six plates of offerings to the God Ahobilesvara by Mahamandalesvara Nandyala China Avubhalayya, Son of Narasingayyadeva, maharaju and the grandson of Singarayya-deva maharaju of Atreya-gotra and Soma-Vamsa for ■■■ merit of Havali Peda Avubhala deva-maharaju.	S.I.I. Vol. XVI. No.165, pp. 172-173.  (A.R.No. 81 of 1915)
13	1548 A.D.	Sadasivaraya	On the westwall of the Narasimhasvami temple Lower Ahobilam.	Telugu	The inscription states that Narasamma, wife of Mahamandaleswara Goburi Vobaya ■■■ Kasyapa-gotra and Yajus-saktha having constructed a Vasantha mandapam ■■■ north of Diguva-Tirupati, endowed 120 varahas to ■■■ temple for conducting out ■■■ interest the festivals for the God Ahobalesvara. The four sons of the Donor Narasamma namely, Narasing Raju, Narasaraju, Timmaraju and other (name missing ) were to supervise the proper conduct of the festivals enjoined in the gift.	S.I.I. Vol.XVI No. 169.P. 177.  (A.R. No. 63 of 1915)
14	1550 A.D.	Sadasivaraya	Round the platform of the	Telugu	It registers the gift of a piece of land in the Village Alamuru purchased from Van sathagopa	S.I.I. Vol. XVI No. 174, P.181.

			huge pillar (Jayasambha) in the Narasimhasvami- temple. Lower Ahobilam,		Jiyyamgaru ■■■ other officials connected with the management of the temple, for raising ■ garden, the coconut ■■■ other trees, in favour of God Ahobalesvara by Avubhalaraju, Son of Thimmaya deva maharaju of Gangya-gotra. Apastamba sutra and Yajus Saka.	(A.R. No. 75 of 1915)
15	1552 A.D.	Sadasiva Raya	(West ■■■ of the Narasimhasvami- Temple) Lower Ahobilam,	Telugu	The inscription records the endowment of the village Gunjepalli in Dupati-sima as ■ poliyutugrama to ■■■ temple treasury of Ahobalesvara by Mahamandalesvara Kondayadeva maharaja, ■■■ ■■■ Ramaraju ■■■ raju who ■■■ the village for 500 varahas for ■■■ Ramanuja Kutam Vaishnavas at Diguva Tirupati. The donor belonged to Atreya-gotra, Apastamba ■■■ and Yaju-sakhi and ■■■ his descent from ■■■ ■■■ race. ■■■ held Dupati-Sima as nayankara conferred on ■■■ by the king.	S.I.I. Vol XVI ■■■ 181. Pp. 187-88. (A.R. No. 61 of 1915)
16	1553 A.D.	Sadasiva Raya	(Slab set up near the Dunudumandapa	Telugu	The inscription records an endowment of twenty varahas as poliyutu for maintaining offerings during the 16 days of festivals every year when	S.I.I. Vol. XVI. No. ■■■ P. 188 (A.R. No. 80 of

			on the way to Upper Ahobilam) Upper Ahobilam		<p>   Ahobalesvara was  in the 16-  pillared Mandapa built by Mahamandalesvara  Aparatikamalla Kunugeti  deva  Maharaju Son of Obularaju and grandson of  Timmaraju of Kasyapagotra, Apastamba, Yajus-   and solar-race </p>	1915)
17	1554 A D	Sadasiva Raya	(Slab set up in the court yard of the Narasimha Swami . Temple) Lower Ahobilam	Telugu	<p> The inscription registers the dasavanda-manyā  grant of  in the village of Pedakallu to   Avubhalaraju,    Konetirajayya  grandson of Rama Raju  Pedakondayyadeva maharaju of the lunar race  by Parankusa van Sathagopa Jyyar, the trustee  of the temple Hanharanathuni Peddayya, the  agent of Mahamandalesvara Aliya  Ramappayya and  adthikamvaru, for his  having constructed the  of Konasamudram  alias Snmannarayana Samudram near  Alamuru </p>	<p> S II XVI,  No 199  Pp 205-206  (A R No 65 of  1915) </p>
18	1554 A D	Sadasivaraya	(Slab set up in the courtyard of the Narasimhasvami temple) Lower Ahobilam	Telugu	<p> The inscription records the sale of a grove and a  flower garden for  varahas in the village  Alamuru belonging to the god Ahobilesvara by  Parankusa Van Sathagopajyyar, the trustees of   temple Hanharanathuni Peddiraju and </p>	<p> S II Vol XVI   p 207  (A R No 66 of  1915) </p>

					<p>of Koneiraju and grandson of Ramaraju Peda Kondayadeva Maharaju of the Lunar race, stipulating that a third share of the produce was to be enjoyed by the God and the rest by donor.</p>	
19	1555A.D.	Sadasivaraya	(Westwall of the Narasimha svami Temple) Lower Ahobilam.	Telugu	<p>The record is incomplete. It seems to register a gift (of land) to the God Ahobala Narasimha by Ganapatiadeva Maharaju, of Kasyapa-gotram, Apastambasutra, and Yajus and the son of Nandiraju and grand son of Krishnaraju of the Solar race.</p>	S.I.I. Vol.XVI No. 205 p.212 (A.R. No. 59 of 1915).
20	1558 A.D.	Sadasivaraya	(Slab up the sixteen pillared mandapam) Upper Ahobilam.	Telugu	<p>This partly damaged inscription the grant of a piece of land and some money by Emberumanar Jiyamgaru, the mudra-karta Van sathagopa Jiyangaru and for conducting certain God Ahobilesvara was in the 16-pillared mandapa constructed by Mahamandalesvara kuruceti Thimmaraju Son of Vobularaju and grand son of Baicana deva coda maharaju, Son of Vobularaju and grandson of deva-coda maharaju of the solar race, when the God was taken in procession to the Lower Tirupati</p>	S.I.I. Vol. XVI. No. 235. P.241. (A.R. No. 79 of 1915)

					(Ahobilam) and back to the temple. The details of the offerings on the occasions are given, but they are not clear.	
21	1560 A.D.	Ssdasivaraya	(Slab set up on the way to Upper Ahobalam to the south-east of the Narasimhasvami temple) Upper Ahobilam.	Telugu	The inscription registers the purchase of a piece of land for 200 varahas from the temple treasury and gift of income derived from it for conducting the festivals in a mandapa in front of the Prahladavarada temple at Diguva Tirupati to the God Ahobaleswara by Mahamandalesvara Gopinath raju, son of Goparaju and grandson of Juturi Bhatiraju of the lunar race, Atreya-gotra of Apastamba Sutra. The items of offerings are specified.	S.I.I. Vol. XVI. No. 254 pp. 253-254 (A.R. 78 of 1915)
22	1563 A.D.	sadasivaraya	Slab set up to the right of the entrance of kanchugumbha - gopura in the Narasimhasvami temple. Lower Ahobilam.	Telugu	The inscription records the gift of 6 varahas of land by Ramanuja Jiyar, the Karya-karta of mahamandalesvara Ramaraju Tirumalajayyadeva - maharaju and other temple of mahamandalesvara vobularaju, son of Vobularaju and grand son of pociraju Ramaraju for a gift of 1000 varahas remitted by him into the temple treasury and registers the grant of this land by vobularaju for worship and offerings in the temple of Nammalvar and for feeding twelve Srivaishnavas out of the yield from these lands.	S.I.I. Vol.XVI. No. 257 p. 262-264 (A.R. No. 69 of 1915)

23	1563 A.D.	Sadasivaraya	(Slab set up near the Kanchugubba gopura of the Narasimhaswami Temple) Lower Ahobilam.	Telugu	The inscription registers ■ grant of lands in ■ villages kalutapalle in Korokola-sima, and Pedakallu, Domipadu, Injedu and Bayyapaguduru, yielding a total income of 308 varahas to be utilised for offerings ■ the God Ahobalesvara by mahamandalesvara Koneti Obularajayyadeva-maharaju, son of Koneti Ayyadeva maharaju and grandson of Ramaraju ■ Kondarajayya deva maharaju ■ Atreyagotra, Apastambasutra and yajus sakha.	S.I.I. Vol.XVI No. 260 pp.265-266 (A.R. No.72 of 1915)
24	1563 A.D.	Sadasivaraya	(Slab in the courtyard of ■ ■ ■ Swami Temple) Upper Ahobilam.	Telugu	The inscription records the ■ of a four-pillared mandapa and a matha ■ registers ■ grant ■ a piece of ■ land in ■ village Cinna komeria in Ghandi ■ by parankusa van sathagopa-Jiyyamaru stipulating that the income derived from the gift-land was to be ■ for ■ offerings on ■ occasions when ■ god ■ was ■ in the mandapa during ■ pancha-parvas and ■ tirunalu when the deity was taken out in procession from the hill down and back again.	S.I.I. Vol. XVI No. 261. Pp. 267-268 (A.R. No. 82 of 1915)



25	1564 A.D.	Sadasivaraya	(Slab set up near the entrance of Kanchugumba gopura of the Narasimhasvami Temple) Lower Ahobilam.	Telugu	The inscription registers the grant of a piece of [redacted] in Lingamdinne in Ghandikola-sima to the God Ahobulesvara for specified offerings and their distribution during [redacted] festivals in [redacted] month of Caitra, near the tank constructed by him on the way to Bhargavam by [redacted] Van Sathagopa Jijyar who received this piece of land from Narasayya who is stated to [redacted] [redacted] the village Lingamadinne [redacted] Nandela Timmaraju.	S.I.I. Vol. III No. [redacted] Pp.269-270 (A.R. No. 73 of 1915)
26		Sadasivaraya	(On the [redacted] wall of the Narasimhasvami Temple) Lower Ahobilam.	Telugu	This fragmentary inscription registers the [redacted] of 300 [redacted] gadyas in the temple treasury of the God Ahobalesvara for [redacted] Village Ciluru in Podili-sima, as a perpetual [redacted] (Polivutu) for offerings and services to the God when [redacted] halted in [redacted] 16-pillared mandapa built in [redacted] temple garden on specified occasions. The name of the donor who [redacted] Podili-sima as his nayankara and the [redacted] of the [redacted] [redacted] lost.	S.I.I. Vol. XVI. No. 271. P. 278 (A.R. No. 62 of 1915)
27	1584 A.D.	Srirangaraya I (1572-1585 A.D.)	[redacted] set up near the entrance of the kanchu-	Telugu	The inscription states that on a former occasion in the year Bahudhanya (1579A.D.) Ibrahim with the Hande chiefs captured Ahobalam and held it	S.I.I., Vol. XVI. No. 296, pp. 302-303

			gumba gopura of the Narasimhasvamin temple. Lower Ahobilam		for 5 or 6 years. On the representation of Van Sathagopa Jiyyar, Venkataraju who took an active part in recapturing the place and restoring it to its past glory was granted temple honours such as pariyavattam, tirtham, sathagopam, etc., by vakulabharana Jiyyar, the karya-karta of Vansathagopa Jiyyar Racappa, the Karya-karta of the king and the sthanikas of the temple.	(A.R. No. 70 of 1915)
28	1586 A.D.	Venkatapatiraya II (1585-1614 A.D.)	Slab set up at the entrance of the kanchugumba gopuram of the Narasimhasvami in Temple. Lower Ahobilam.	Telugu	The inscription registers poliyuttu gift of eighty varahas being the income derived from ten Tiruvilaiyattam villages of the temple by Mahanandaleswara Venkataraju Devachodamaharaju, son of Timmanna and grandson of kondraju Timmaraju of Kasyapa-gotra, Apastamba sutra, Yajus Saktha and solar race, for maintenance of several services in the temple of Ahobila.	S.I.I. Vol. XVI. No. 200 Pp. 327-329 (A.R. No. 71 of 1915)
29	1590 A.D.	Venkatapati II	Slab set up in Kanchugumba gopuram of the Narasimhasvamin temple Lower Ahobilam.	Telugu	The inscription registers a gift of land for offerings during the procession of god Prahlada-varada at Diguva Tirupati by Savaram Rangapparaju, son of Yellapparaju and grandson of Suraparaju of Mallapa chintakunta.	S.I.I. Vol. No. XVI No. 301, pp 308-09 (A.R. No. 72 of 1915)

30	1915 A.12	Venkatapati II	Slab 14 near the entrance of kanchugumbagopuram of the Narasimha svamin temple, Lower Ahobilam.	Telugu	The inscription registers the gift of seven gold gilded pinnacles, 140 fly whisks and 1000 silk umbrellas to the god <i>Ahobilam</i> at Diguva Tirupati by Madiseti Rudrayya and others for the merit of 150 nagarasvamis who bear among others the title <i>perugonda puravandhisvara</i> .	S.I.I. Vol.XVI No. 310. P.317 (A.R. 87 of 1915)
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Note : Above serial nos. are in accordance with the serial nos.  
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## GLOSSARY

Abhaya	A posture of Protection
Abhishekam	Religious <del>ritual</del> of pouring <del>or</del> sprinkling sacred water <del>on</del> the image of a deity.
Acharyas	Religious preachers
Agamas	sacred texts related to the conduct of worship
Agraharam	Village gifted away to <del>the deity</del>
Akasvani	A heavenly voice
Akanda dipam	Perpetual lamp
Alagia Singer	<del>Lord</del> Narasimha (Alagia=beautiful)
Alankara	Decoration, <del>ornamentation</del>
Alvar	A Vaishnavite Saint
Angaranga bhogas	Procession <del>and</del> rituals with pomp
Antarala	Ante-Chamber
Aradhana	Special Worship
Argya	Washing the <del>hands</del>
Asana	Offering of a <del>seat</del>
Avahana	Localisation
Avatar	Manifestation, incarnation
Bhogam	Food offering to the deity
Brahmotsavam	Annual festival, Grand <del>festival</del>
Chakra	The weapon of Lord Vishnu, Disc
Chamara	<del>Fan</del> made of <del>silken</del> fibres for fanning the celestial beings
Chandanam	<del>Scented</del> Paste
Dasavatas	Ten incarnations of God Vishnu
Dhanurmasotsavam	<del>Month</del> during which worship of God is celebrated early in <del>the</del> morning
Dharma	The approved way of life
Dhupam	The <del>smell</del> of incense smoke
Dhvaja Stambham	<del>Flag</del> <del>in</del> front of the temple
Dikpalakas	Guardian deities
Dipotsavam	Festival of burning of oil lamps
Dvara <del>Palakam</del>	<del>Sentinels</del> on either side of <del>the</del> entrance of a temple
<del>Ekadashi</del>	<del>Eleventh</del> day, after the full moon.
Gadyana	Gold coin, money.
<del>Garbhagriha</del>	Sandal-wood paaste
Garbhagriha	Sanctum Sanctorum, inner sanctum
Garuda	The Vehicle of Lord Vishnu, a divine eagle
Giri	Hill
Gopuram	Tower before a temple
<del>Pravara</del> Seva	A procession <del>of</del> the deity round the village
Kaifiyat	A <del>written</del> <del>document</del>
Kalyana mandapam	Wedding hall
Kiritam	Crown
Kirti mukha	Lion's face

Koneru	Pond
Kshetram	A holy place
Kurtcha	A measure <b>kurtti</b> for liquid
<b>Kudam</b>	A coin in the medieval times
Mahatmayam	Power or greatness
Mahotsavam	Great <b>maatsavam</b>
Makuta	A crown, cap
Makara Toranam	A type of festoon in a temple, makara canopy
Malya	Decoration with garlands and flowers
Mandapam	A hall with art side-walls, but with pillars and roof of stones
Maridalesvara	Head of a small group
Manika	Liquid measure
Matha	Monastery, place of residence of religious mendicants
Masotsavas	Monthly festivals
Mula Vighram	Presiding deity
Mukha Mandapam	Entrance hall, front hall
Nambi	A Non-brahmin Vaishnava priest
Naivedyam	Offering in kind made to the deity
Narasimha	Man-lion (Human body with lion's face)
Nirajana	Circumambulation of a lamp
Padma	Lotus
Pakshotsavas	Fortnightly festivals
Panakam	Jaggery solution tastefully spiced
Pavalimpu Utsavam or	Sending the Lord to <b>Varanasi</b> with soft music etc.
Parrupu seva	
Paruvettai	'Paru' means run <b>paruvu</b> 'Veta' means hunt
Prakara	Enclosure
Pradakshina	Going round the deity in the temple, circumambulation
Prasadam	<b>Prasada</b> distributed after offering to the deity
Parivara Devatas	Subsidiary deities
Puja	Worship
Pujari	Priest
Puranas	Hindu religious books
Pushpa	A flower
Pushkarani	Sacred pond
Pushpamalalu	Garlands of flowers
Putti	Grain measure (basket)
Rathotsavam	Temple car festival
<b>Ramanama</b> Puja	Worship chanting the <b>Ramanama</b> names of the deity
Samprokshana	Hallowing by cleansing
<b>Sankha</b>	Conch
<b>Sankhanti</b>	A shrine
Sarvamanya	Exclusive gift of land

Satakam	A book of 100 poems
Senabova	Village
Sloka	Couplet or quatrain in Tamil
Soumyarupa	Graceful form
Sthala Puranam	History of the place
Sthanapati	An official-in-charge of the temple
Stambam	Pillar
Svayambhu	Self-manifest
Tirtham	Sacred or sanctified water
Tirumanjanam	Holy bathing
Tirunakshatram	Constellations obtaining at the time of birth
Tirunal	Festival
Tiruvidhi	Taking procession around the temple
Tulasimala	Garland of bunches of basil-leaves
Tum	Measure of land
Tumu	Grain measure
Ugrarupa	Awe-inspiring posture
Utsavam	Ceremony
Utsava Vighrahas	Procession images
Vahanam	Vehicle
Varaha	Civil coin
Vargjas	Columns
Varotsavas	Weekly festivals
Vasantotsavam	Celebration of a festival connected with sprinkling of coloured water in the spring season
Vastra	Clothing
Venjamara	A white fly-whisk
Yajnopavita	Sacred thread around the shoulder
Yuga	Period of time according to the tradition

## ABBREVIATIONS

A.R.I.E.	...	Annual Reports on Indian Epigraphy
A.R.S.I.E.	...	Annual Reports on South Indian Epigraphy
E.I.	...	Epigraphia Indica
Ep. Car	...	Epigraphia Carnatica
H.A.S.	...	Hyderabad Archaeological Series
I.A.P.C.	...	Inscriptions of Andhra Pradesh, Cuddapah District
Ind. Ant.	...	Indian Antiquary
J.A.H.R.S.	...	Journal of Andhra Historical Research Society
L.A.	...	Lower Ahobilam
LR	...	Local Records
Mack. MSS	...	Mackenzie Manuscripts
M.E.R.	...	Madras Epigraphical Reports
Q.J.M.S.	...	Quarterly Journal of Mythic Society
S.A.	...	Sahitya Academy
S.I.I.	...	South Indian Inscriptions
T.T.D.I.	...	Tirumala-Tirupati Devasthanams Inscriptions
U.A.	...	Upper Ahobilam





*Sri Narasimhaswami Temple of Ahobilam is one of the most celebrated pilgrim centres in the country. Located on the Nallamala hills in Andhra Pradesh, this sacred temple, dedicated to Lord Sriman Narayana, who manifested Himself as Man-Lion to save His supreme devotee Prahlada, is invested with great antiquity.*

*Many puranas and ancient works exultantly praise the magnificent glory of the shrine and the radiant charm of the Deity.*

*In this book the author makes an intensive study of Ahobilam group of temples.*

*An exhaustive account of the history and administration is also given besides exploring the architectural as well as cultural wealth of the temple.*

*Profusely illustrated,*

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*is an indispensable book for the devotees and students of history.*

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